

CORRESPONDENCE
ON THE
PRESENT RELATIONS
BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN
AND THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

by
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Long, Boston.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following Correspondence between an English and an American lawyer was not written with any purpose of publication. It is now printed by the advice of a few friends, by whom the letters were read as they were written or received; and who are of opinion that such a frank interchange of views, entertained by individuals on either side, possessing similar means of somewhat extensive information, entertaining each for the other cordial esteem, and entirely free from any pre-existing national prejudices or ill-will which could unfavorably temper the discussion, might aid in the formation of correct opinions upon the painful relations subsisting between the people of England and the people of the loyal States of America in reference to the Rebellion.

No apology, therefore, need be made for the carelessness of style incidental to an off-hand correspondence; nor for the incompleteness of views, which, under other circumstances, might have been more carefully elaborated.

It is necessary to explain that the "letter in print," alluded to in Letter I., was an article in a daily newspaper on the Trent affair, written by the American correspondent, (his initials being attached to it,) and by him forwarded to his friend in London, not, however, in the form of a letter, or addressed to any one but the editor of the newspaper.

Boston, November, 1862.



CORRESPONDENCE.

I.

SQUIRE'S MOUNT, HAMPSTEAD,
16th January, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A letter from you, even though it be in print, and on that wearisome subject of "*The Trent outrage*," is welcome at the old house you remember on the top of Hampstead Hill. I am so infamous a correspondent, that, knowing I never write at all unless at once, I have passed, and am now performing, a vow to acknowledge it before I go to bed to-night.

You will, ere this, have found argument enough on the Trent subject in our and the French newspapers. I am not going to discuss the question. We English have been the great sinners on these matters, insisting on dragging others into the vortex of our own wars; and out of our own mouths you should be content to judge us. On the question, "What should an admiralty court have done, had the 'San Jacinto' brought up the 'Trent' for adjudication?" it seems to me that the "Hendrik and Alida" case is indisputable. You American lawyers are so much more versed in international law than we are, that I wonder you have

none of you cited that case. I am surprised that your lawyers have not felt more the incongruity of the view, which, having obtained the right of search and of blockade as against neutrals by admitting the Slave States to be belligerents, still claims to hold these belligerents rebels ; and I am satisfied that Mr. Seward, with his now declared views, would have been wiser to have acted on them *on the moment of receiving news of the capture*, instead of putting the knaves temporarily into dungeons of the condemned-cell class.

One thing should come out of this affair, — a better rule as to the right of search and the law of contraband. I trust, if we ask too wide a rule, we shall be cut down. The “*Journal des Débats*” (the most favorable, to your views, of the French papers) said the other day to this effect: “It will never do to stretch the rights of belligerency and search in this way. We French have the good fortune to be at war with the Emperor of Cochin China. We have the advantage of being belligerents, and to possess, according to the idea contended for, a universal right of search. We may, therefore, search every packet-boat between Dublin and Holyhead, as long as it pleases us to go on fighting the Brother of the Sun and Moon,” &c., &c.

Why should not we English keep up our coveted right of search on the African coast by reason of our belligerency with the Caffres or New-Zealanders ? These questions, to me, seem to suggest the absolute necessity of limiting the right, if not of search, at least of capture.

But I notice your letter principally because it affirms a desire to exist here “for war with America, and also the existence of a long-cherished hatred towards you and your institutions.” If the “New-York Herald” had made such a charge, I could have understood it; but that you, or any wise, moderate philosopher in Massachusetts, should hold such a fancy, is to us a marvel beyond expression. We got your letter yesterday; and, on reading it in our circle, there was a perfect outcry, “What on earth will be the next dream of our dear friends! Will they think we are cannibals, and want to pick their bones white?” Let me tell you, that if any thing can be now spoken of Englishmen, *universally*, more than another, it is of their most earnest desire not to quarrel with their brother Anglo-Saxons of the North United States. Include the cotton-men of Lancashire even, and you could not find many dozen men in all the realm to whom the prospect of such a war would not be (nay, was not the other day) as humiliating as the notion would be, that he had on him the stern necessity of fighting a duel with say a brother or brother-in-law. We have here a feeling, all but universal, against the divine right of slaveholding, quite, when we look at history, beyond reason, and exciting in us a shudder like that a silly, superstitious girl sometimes has in passing a graveyard at midnight; and to think, as we have all been thinking lately, that we not only have to fight a duel with a near relative, but also should be drawn, or might possibly be drawn, into any kind of

alliance with those who base their union on this devilish doctrine, has been so disgusting and degrading a prospect to us, that it has made us all sick to loathing. "What a loss!" said Sir Thomas Phillips to me on the day of the news of Prince Albert's death. "Can you think much of the death of any one human creature, however important, compared with the prospect of this miserable war?" was my answer. Let your newspapers, statesmen, and ambassadors tell you what you like: take from me, an old, dispassionate looker-on in politics, the above as almost the most undeniable thing (next to a love for our own freedom) which can be predicated of Britain and the British. As long as you treat us like gentlemen (I think Seward's waiting to see what we did, when he thought all the while we were right, was more like a lawyer than a gentleman), I don't believe the Emperor of the French himself, with all the cotton-lords (and they will be few) he can enlist, will persuade us towards moving to break the blockade, even though it be ever so paperish a one. So far for politics: now to "pastures new."

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Last summer, we had a lone house for our sketching quarters on the Thames, twenty miles below Oxford; a ferry attached to it, which one man was obliged to work day and night too, if the passengers could wake him. I spent many and many a pleasant hour, when saturated with sketching, in sailing my New-York centre-board little boat, the "Yankee"; the star-

spangled banner, of course, in full fly at the peak. The Great Western Railway crossed the Thames near us; and, quiet as was the land and water, the trains in mid air brought thousands of eyes to admire the boat and the beautiful flag. What will be the issue of its stars from your troubles? I have said I will no more politics, or I must have added a word or two why we think our old saying, "Good shut of bad rubbish," should be the doctrine of your policy, as the best way of getting rid of the plague of slave recognition and its devotees.

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Pray, remember me, with all kindness and esteem, to Professor Parsons; also to your family. . . . Now that international questions have a lull, is there no chance of his coming to perfidious Albion? or of yours once more? Rely on one thing: never was there so profound a determination for non-intervention and peace in a people as there is now in the English nation, and in those of every shade of politics and thought. I wish you could lift up voice enough to persuade your people to act on this conviction; and I would come over to Massachusetts, to be hung, drawn, and quartered, if the conviction proved untrue.

Yours very truly,

EDWIN W. FIELD.

CHARLES G. LORING, Esq.,
Boston, Massachusetts.

II.

BOSTON, U. S. A.

MY DEAR MR. FIELD,

I cannot well express to you, without seeming guilty of exaggeration, the gratification with which I read your letter. I took leave to circulate it among your friends here, and others who know you by reputation, as it was the first authentic manifestation (excepting in the speeches of Mr. Bright and the utterances of Mr. J. Stuart Mill and of a very few others of your distinguished men) that any considerable number of your countrymen entertained other feelings towards us and our institutions than those of deep-seated dislike and hostility; and I confess, that it surprises me to learn from any source that such may be the fact.

Your Government hastening to recognize, at the very outbreak of an atrocious rebellion (having no other foundation or pretence than resistance to any check upon the continuance and spread of chattel-slavery), the rebels as a *belligerent*, entitled to the *same consideration* as the long-established and friendly Government they were attempting by force of arms to subvert; — your press, from the most conservative and respectable quarterlies down to the most contemptible gazettes, with scarcely one exception, teeming with

atrocious libels upon our people, their civilization, principles, powers, motives, and personal attributes, and with scandalously false accusations of our Government, and attempts to degrade it in the eyes of the civilized world; — the Parliamentary declaration, through one of your most distinguished statesmen, that the war, on the part of the Government, was one for *dominion*, and, on the part of the rebels, for *independence*, (a declaration so unwarranted and palpably untrue, as for ever hereafter to lead us to distrust any statements he may make on any political relation between our respective countries;) — the general tone of English society, as made known to us by our correspondents and returning friends; — the hot haste in which your Government sought to consider as an intended affront what they had no reason to believe to be designed for one, without waiting an instant for opportunity to get at the facts, and much less for one for explanation; — the bullying attitude assumed towards an old friend, whose arms were tied behind him; — and your recent virtual exclusion of our ships-of-war from your ports, as if our whole navy were of the same account as the two solitary pirates sent out by the rebels, — all these things have led us to believe, and the conviction is nearly if not quite universal, that we have foes where we thought we had friends, and nothing to rely upon in the friendship, not even in the *willing* neutrality, of your country, should her sense of self-interest induce her to think a war with us to be profitable.

It rejoices my heart to learn, that there are respecta-

ble numbers who think and feel differently, and who are disposed to recognize the claims of kindred origin, literature, religion, and love of freedom; and I fervently desire that the wide increase of such sentiments may soon become manifest, to heal, at least in some measure, the wounds that now rankle deep in the hearts of my countrymen, and, I must sorrowfully add, deep in my own.

The change has been particularly sad to me and my friends, who had formed interesting friendships in what they loved to look upon as the *mother-country*. I know that I must have loved you, wherever I might have met you; but I doubt not that my friendship for you and others was heightened by the sentiment that we were of one race, and that our countries, in the chief essentials of Christian civilization (at least so far as New England was concerned), were the same. England was to me a hallowed spot; and I looked forward to another visit there as among the hopes of the future. My whole intercourse with your countrymen had led me to believe that there was a cordial goodwill towards us, which every man should do his utmost to cultivate and extend. The consciousness of supposed superiority, which few of them know how to conceal, and many are not aware of as appearing in their manners, sometimes amused, but never offended me; and, until ten months ago, no passport to my hospitality, — humble indeed, but hearty, — and to that of my friends generally, was more sure than an introduction as a gentleman from England.

This feeling had been of late growing throughout our country with surprising rapidity and strength. It was exhibited (I should have thought unmistakably) in the universal gratification expressed throughout the land in the opportunity to evince our national goodwill in the restoration of the Arctic ship the "Resolute"; in sending an expedition in search of Sir John Franklin; in raising our flags at half-mast when Havelock fell; in contributions for Ireland; and in the reception of your Prince, which no observer could mistake as a popular excitement for a pageant merely, instead of seeing in it the exhibition of a downright hearty good-will to your Queen and people. Had she landed on our shores, it would have been more feelingly demonstrated; and no monarch, at home, could receive an ovation more grateful to a generous and noble heart than she would have met with here.

And, had trouble arisen between England and any of the great powers of Europe, our sympathies, and, if needed, I am confident that our aid, would have been promptly given. I lament to say, but honest truth demands it, that this is now all reversed. We feel that we have, substantially, enemies in those whom we accounted fast friends, and towards whom we certainly entertained, and had extended the hand of, most cordial friendship. I should, if going abroad, avoid England; and many have I heard say the same thing, among those who loved her best. Not that I should not most heartily rejoice to take you by the hand anywhere and everywhere, and others who, I cannot doubt, still

judge us and our cause kindly, if not justly : but I could not feel at ease among your countrymen without previous assurance that they were not of the majority on this subject ; and a keen sense of national wrong would render intercourse with them any thing but agreeable to either party.

It seems strange to us, that England, who has apparently no friend among European powers, should thus wantonly throw away the cordial good-will of a kindred nation, that is more able to assist her in an extremity than any other, and whose moral support alone, considering language, descent, and love of freedom, must be worth something, even to her haughty people. But it is done ; and fifty years cannot, if time ever can, restore what has been thus ruthlessly cast away in a day.

We all rejoice that the Trent affair was settled without a war. For us to have entered into one which could be avoided, would, in our circumstances, have been madness : though England would not have found us so helpless as she imagined ; nor that twenty millions of people, possessing within themselves all the resources for war and self-support, and animated by a burning sense of outrage, and of the design to take advantage of their weakness to crush them, could be easily subdued ; nor that we were so recreant to our Saxon manhood as to yield, while ability to fight remained. A people that can improvise an army of six hundred thousand fighting men, well equipped with all arms, for the field, in seven months, *and every man a volunteer*, and increase its navy tenfold ; and that

pour out their money like water in support of the Government, and in aid of the families of those who go out to defend it, — may be entitled to some respect as a military power, at least at home. Nevertheless, a war with you might have retarded our extinction of the Rebellion, whose neck is now under our feet ; though you must pardon me for saying, that I think it by no means certain that England would eventually have suffered less than the United States. But it is not to be inferred, that we are unconscious of the humiliation we suffer in this transaction. I am for once glad that ingenuity and sophistry can seemingly hoodwink the people of two great countries into the belief, that it was right in your Government to make the demands it made, and in the manner in which this was done, and that we could yield to them without dishonor ; but the thinking part of our people look much deeper, see through the veil, and feel that neither is true.

Now, my dear friend, you must not infer from this frank statement of my own feelings, and of those generally pervading society here so far as known to me, that we are cherishing, or would have our people cherish, vindictive passions, which are to be subdued for the present only, or until convenient opportunity shall arrive for letting them loose. Very far from it. We are all conscious that it is of the utmost importance to our country to remain at peace with yours, not from apprehension of your superior force, but from the conviction, that the progress of civilization, and all the

great ends of human life, would be sacrificed or checked, by a war between us, for an indefinite period ; and that not only a permanent but a most bitter hostility would ever after exist on both sides. But all I mean to say is, that the conduct of your Government and of your people, as almost universally indicated by your press and your society, has sadly abated the cordial friendship we before felt as a nation ; and that a deep sense of injury, the deeper and more hard to bear because that injury comes from those whom we supposed our warm friends, and to whom we had often and very recently extended the hand of cordial friendship, has sunk into our hearts.

I trust, however, that this calamity, alike grievous, as I must think, to both nations, will not estrange those of us who have learned to esteem and respect each other as personal friends. It surely shall not estrange me from those whom I so regard in your country, nor diminish by one iota the happiness with which I should greet you, or any one whom you might give to me the privilege of knowing and receiving as your friend. Indeed, it would possibly add to my pleasure, in the conviction that something was thus done towards a restoration of the kind feelings between the two nations which I so earnestly wish to have return.

One word more upon the nature of this conflict, and I quit the painful theme. It was, on the part of the Free States, a struggle for *national life*. The National Government was rebelled against ; its fortresses, ves-

sels, arms, and moneys were secretively or forcibly seized by the rebels under various false pretences ; until open war was commenced by the attack on Fort Sumter. The Government had no alternative but to surrender its life, or crush the Rebellion. To have consented to the secession of the rebel States would have been to surrender its whole vitality. To admit the right of secession was to dissolve the Union,—leaving every State to go out at pleasure, and reducing our National Government to an empty form. To yield to the demand, without admitting the right, would have been to confess the inability of the Government to maintain itself. There was no alternative but to fight, or abandon all the reality of a *national existence*, *all power* to protect ourselves at home or abroad. Beyond this, in the future, with two or twenty, as the case might be, different independent sovereignties on this continent, no peace, strength, or prosperity could be anticipated. We should have been perpetually exposed to intestine jealousies and broils, and interventions from abroad, involving all the worst calamities of civil and foreign conflict, with no settled internal or external policy, and with the constant and ever-increasing destructive moral and political influences of sudden, vindictive, and desolating wars.

It is for salvation from these and other unutterable woes to ourselves and our children, and for the support of the mildest and most equal government the world ever saw, that we are fighting,—against the most wanton and atrocious rebellion (and one avowedly for the

maintenance and extension of human slavery) which stains the pages of history; and whatever may be the opinion of England now, and however willing she may be that we should fail, and be broken into bleeding fragments, rather than stand in the way of her prosperity or supremacy, as has been too often and generally avowed, such, we believe, is our cause in the sight of God, and such will be our record in history. Nor can I doubt that many yet will mourn the day that your country, in the hour of our extremity, placed herself in the false position of throwing her moral and political influence into the scale of our enemies, and this to the support of human slavery.

I must add, that great as are our embarrassments, and fearful as may be the future of privation and sacrifice, *we rejoice in this war*, and would not go back a day in its history. It is infinitely better than the degradation and depravity into which our Government had fallen in the hands of the *slavocracy*, which had obtained almost unlimited control of it, and which seemed fast burying all sense of national honor and self-respect in a gulf of corruption for the support and extension of slavery. We had begun to despair of the Republic, in the fear that there was no loyalty in the people, and no hope of escape from the coils of the serpent which had been so long and successfully twining itself around us. But the first gun at Fort Sumter broke the spell; and we in the Free States now exult in the consciousness of a deep, fervent, and universal patriotism, and spirit of self-sacrifice (which have raised the

people to a noble sense of their wrongs and of their duty ; prompting them, one and all, to take the field, and expend their means at their country's call, without counting the cost in life or wealth), and in the belief that we have now inaugurated a spirit of *American loyalty*, which, though wanting the advantage of a personal object as in your country, will give to our own love of country a moral and political elevation and strength to which it never otherwise could have attained.

And pardon me for adding, as another blessing already realized, the destruction of that morbid sensitiveness to English opinion, censure, and ridicule, as uttered by your press, which has hitherto so tended to diminish our self-respect and the respect of others for us. This sensitiveness was founded on our love for England and her institutions, and on our pride as her descendants. It will never again trouble us.

The general unfriendliness of your public speakers, and quarterlies and magazines and gazettes, in all that relates to us ; the bitter hostility and cruel and unjustifiable taunts and accusations with which many of them have abounded ; and the general tone of English society, as testified to by our friends there, — have taught us to estimate *public* opinion in England in such a manner, that it can have little influence upon us hereafter in any matter relating to ourselves.

Excuse me, my friend, for this long, and, I fear, very tedious tax upon your patience, and perhaps, in some things I have said, a still greater one upon your in-

dulgence. But it is, as you may well believe, the dearest of subjects to an American heart; and I am solicitous that you and our friends in England may better understand us and our feelings upon this topic, than, as far as we can know your opinions and sentiments, you seem to do. And you will excuse, I trust, any seemingly undue warmth or any misapprehension with regard to them.

I conclude my letter, my friend, with a renewal of the most cordial invitation to you and yours, and any whom you may see fit to introduce, to visit us. Do not doubt the heartiest of welcomes. Had war broken out between our respective countries, I must have abandoned my summer home, as it is below all fortified points on the borders of the sea, and accessible to a boat's crew. I am looking forward with impatience, as I do every year, to return to its refreshing and soothing influences; which will be doubly great, if, as I hope, this atrocious Rebellion shall by that time be essentially subdued. When its history shall be written, humanity will blush at the falsehoods, barbarities, and infernal cruelties of the rebels in the conduct of the war; and none will be ready to acknowledge that he ever wished them success.

Ever faithfully yours,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq., London.

P. S. — I omitted to notice a pretence constantly put forth by the rebel emissaries in England, that the

Rebellion was in part to protect the South from oppressive tariffs. Every American, North or South, who knows any thing, knows this to be a deliberate falsehood. It is so far from being true, that, if you search the records of Congress during the agitation of the questions at issue between the North and the South just before the war broke out and when all the subjects of complaint and compromise were discussed, and the records of the Peace Congress assembled from the Slave States and the Free States ostensibly to ascertain if a friendly adjustment could be made, you will find that there was no allusion to any such subject as requiring adjustment, and that the proposals and discussions related entirely and exclusively to slavery, and to the claims made by the South for its protection and extension.

III.

NITON, ISLE OF WIGHT, 6th April, 1862.

Posted LONDON, 11th April, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am at the seaside for a week or two, trying to patch up a vessel now fast growing old and leaky; and your letter has followed me here, and so finds me with time to inflict a long answer. A short one would be no answer at all. The answer should be by another hand; for I am no statesman: and yours on the subject of Perfidious Albion comes, and evidently, from one of the *Patres Conscripti*. I have no clerk here; and, by the time I have got over a page or two, shall have lapsed into such a scrawl, as to give, I fear, your excellent secretary (to whom my best thanks) the job of transcribing this reply, as well as the indictment you sent me: indictment, indeed, and speech for the prosecution, full of eloquence, — both in one.

Yours is not the first Transatlantic bill of complaint which has reached me. — — —, who is over here from your Government about submarine-telegraph matters, brought me the other day a letter from my old friend, his brother, — — —, full of astonishment and queries about the state of irritation, imagined to exist here, against the Northern States. He wanted to know what an old over-mature law-fogie

like me would say about the *furor* supposed to be raging among the politicians. Was it cotton? was it tariff? was it the blockade? and so on and so on. How was it that we did not sympathize with the victims of "the most gigantic rebellion the world ever saw"?

My answer was much like what I had written you a month or so before. It was, that we had learned *from you*, and thoroughly believed in the truth of the lesson you had taught us, viz., that "gigantic rebellion" was a contradiction in terms; — that, loathing the men at their head, still we could not look at the South as *rebels*; — that we thought the feud arose from the inevitable laws of nature; — that there were, and long had been (if not always), vital, fundamental differences between you and them, which must sooner or later come to a death-struggle between you; but that we did, one and all of us, think that their leaders, your late governors, were about the greatest swindlers and villains unhung upon the earth; — that it was not a question of the extent of "Union sentiment South," but "Do not the mass there believe in the right divine of niggerdom?" (or nigger doom, I should call it;) if so, there *can be* no Union sentiment, in the true sense of the word; for you might as well try to mix oil and water as to try to go on with them, you recognizing their Devil's principle in your new partnership; — and that our puzzle, ay, and our disgust too, was, that you were not *anxious* to let them have Pandemonium to themselves. How under the sun you Northern free-men should not jump at the chance of getting rid of

them, and of the responsibility of the slave question, we can't divine. Swindled and robbed as you have been, and insulted afterwards, that you should fight them, thrash them, kick them, flay them alive, — any thing prompted by a just indignation, — seemed and seems to us natural enough (more natural than truly wise and philosophical, of course : but pass that by ; it is in human nature) ; but to fight and thrash, not to punish robbers, and make convicts of them, but deliberately as a means to make them your partners and co-equals again, is to us utterly incomprehensible. To fight, and also *to avow* you fight (but then *loud avowal* is of the essence of the act), in order to narrow their boundaries ; to cut them off from the Territories ; to reclaim as much of the Border States as possible from the dominion of the Devil ; to secure the Mississippi ; and to insure more triumphant terms of separation, — would be at once to have not only England, but all Europe, throw up their hats for you. But *to avow* you fight only to put down a rebellion, is to assert that the quarrel is purely a matter of personal, individual, temporary dissatisfaction, and to continue to admit, that there is nothing in your North and South elemental principles of policy to prevent your re-union. If you (by “ you,” mind, I always mean your Government, and *something that is on the record* ; because your abolitionists and anti-abolitionists are always asserting totally antagonistic things as the operating national objects) — if you say, “ We fight to maintain the Constitution,” England and all Europe (for we and Europe have been

entirely at one in all this matter; and you really must cut Europe, if we ought to be cut for our honest convictions on it) will answer, "Those old wise articles of partnership you call your Constitution, were, after all, 'made with hands'; and it is idolatry to worship them as of the Eternal. Forms of government, like forms of belief, vary, and *are meant to vary*, between people and people, and from age to age; but right and wrong (say the toleration, even within your partnership limits, of niggerdom) are of the Heavens and Eternal." To have the sympathy of Europe, you must say that "These men are (not rebels, but) enemies, whom we will fight to the death and *à outrance*; and whom, till they renounce and from their hearts disclaim their Devil's doctrine of the right divine of White sovereignty, we will, no, never, take to be the partners of our bosoms again."

If you say, — though you (United States) have not said it yet, — "We will conquer these traitors, and will hold them in subjection," we should sympathize to some extent. But we should say, and *in true regard for you*, "For goodness' sake, mind what you do. You will burn your fingers. We know *that* with Ireland, where we have been four hundred years trying to get straight again, and, till within the last thirty years, have made but little real progress; and with India, that most perplexing of problems. Once begin and try, and immediately rights of property, and the like, arise under your guaranty; and you can't back out again at any price. The fix the French are in, by

their occupation of Rome, is an instance, in a small way, of the growth of perplexities which would come on you free Northern men by occupation of the South."

"Oh," say you, "listen to perfidious Albion! You English want us to break up, that we may be a smaller people, and less in your way." What a pity it is, my dear friend, that when a most honest, disinterested, but too passion (to a noble passion, I will allow) an unpalatable advice is given, by man to man, or nation to nation, a contemptible, villanous motive is at once imputed to the giver! The other day, it was Cotton actuated us; then Tariff; then Blockade; and, as I told you you would, you have now found these imputations were utterly untrue. Towards us they were most insulting, and worse than untrue: for, if we had not been loyal to you, they (the motives pointed at) would have become tempters to us; and we have not allowed them to become so. We have had no kind of soothing speech made from the States yet, of regret for having dashed all these insults in our teeth. We know the state of excitement you are all in; and we do not complain, and have not vexed ourselves, about that. But now comes the new count against your perfidious mother. "You" (says United States) "advise us not to make new terms with the Devil, because then the States of Pandemonium will no longer be part of the United States, and we should be a weaker antagonist to you."—"A house divided against itself," &c. (for, united with the South, divided

you more or less must be)^a; I might preach on that text, and a true sermon too; but I will not. I have a better answer. It is this: All the world knows, and surely you all know, that if Canada were to say to us to-morrow, in earnest, "We want to cut our connection with you, and join the States," our answer would be, "Go, and God speed!" And yet would not you be big enough then (however big be the Southern slice you cut off to throw into the Devil's jaws) to frighten any people to whom an agglomeration of acres in one government is a bugbear? My own personal belief is, that you would be a greater people, and a greater stay for freedom all the world over, if you were a nation less in bodily girth, and *therefore less a nation of necessary compromise*. I believe that different climates and zones, and different natural productions, (*naturally* and by the divine appointment,) lead to different policies and objects, and therefore to the institution of different governments and nations. I therefore desire to avow, that I, for one, devoutly hope, *not in the interest of England, but of humanity*, that such may be the tendency of your civil war. I am no statesman, and I may be wrong in these views. You mention — — with approbation. From all I know of his thoughts (and I have studied with profound approbation his writings, and, to some extent, his sayings, since I first met him, now more than forty years ago, at Mr. Bentham's house, in the Class of his reprobates, as Bentham called them, which met there), I believe he would indorse these views. I

think that almost all political economists would agree in them.

Through the effects of our long Anti-corn-law agitation, we, as a nation, are very much more thoroughly impregnated with certain doctrines of political economy than you are. Our national creed differs from yours on economical points, which we (wrongly perhaps) deem vital to national welfare. For instance, if we admitted protective laws to be right, we should adopt the acre-agglomeration idea, and wish all the world to be one nation.

Moreover, we are so small in our acreage, that doubtless we get to fancy acres have less to do with the greatness of a people than they really have ; while no doubt there must be with you, in the nature of things, a tendency to exaggerate in the other direction.

Then, again, we here really believe, as a practical and dominant national faith and policy (though we launch a great deal of humbug and Bunkum-speech, generally of a religious kind, to the contrary), in what, as amongst human beings, I think some one on your side of the water has called the individualism of the individual : viz., that differences, among nations, of creeds, of state-organizations, of political principles, make the world not only more active, but wider and freer ; that freedom cannot exist without these differences ; that the world is far better off for being divided into a lot of nations, than if all were fused into one ; that, for the advantage of mankind, different objects of national policy and national pride (many very

false, all imperfect) must and *ought* to arise amongst men, and must and *ought* to be allowed to split them up into different nations and concerns. And we in England, to an extent you in America cannot realize, do now profoundly believe in the value of competition, — of national competition as well as that of traders.

I believe it to be quite true, that all England — certainly all your best friends here — would wish to see you clear of the South. But don't lay these honest and loving wishes to the low motives your letter implies.

The fierceness of feeling on your side the sea towards us, and the absolute absence of any counterpart feeling here, is very remarkable. You, an old, wise, quiet man of the world, would be free from this fierceness if any one could be ; but it absolutely tingles and throbs in every syllable of your letter. “ Goodness ! ” said my eldest daughter on reading it, “ what can we English have done ? Why, the letter is *hissing hot* ! ” — — — was very much struck with this absence here of echo, or polarity, or correspondency, or induction, or whatever I shall call it. He had expected to find us also at blood-heat, if not at boiling-heat ; and he said he was most anxious to be able to return at once, only to tell all his people that he had been day and night amongst all sorts of men, — Government men, members of Parliament, merchants, lawyers, — had seen everybody, or a good sample of everybody, and had not once heard, no, not one single unkind word expressed, or thought indicated, towards America

since he had landed. Never were half a dozen pairs of eyes opened wider than when he told our circle, that neither his wife nor daughters had come with him to England because of the state of our minds, and the course of our conduct and thoughts here, towards America. However, we may both of us rest safely, I hope, for the present, on the truth of the old proverb, "It takes *two* to make a quarrel."

Newspapers, gazettes, &c., &c., — two old lawyers, like you and me, surely need not waste words about them. If you think otherwise, and will send me over a file of the "New-York Herald," indorsed as admitted proofs to be read on the trial, as against America, *ad lib.*, then I must needs do scavenger's work among our papers. Why, clever bitternesses and artificial thunder are their stock in trade. The Lord Chancellor (———, I think it was) sent me, years ago, with a message to —— —, about some court arrangements which he, as Vice-Chancellor, was supposed to have made. "What could make the Lord Chancellor think I had settled so and so?" said his Honor. "I suppose it was because he saw it in the newspapers," I answered. "Nobody living could know better than the Lord Chancellor, that, if it was in the newspapers, it was sure to be a lie," was his Honor's reply. Allow what you please for the caricature, still a caricature has its basis of truth.

The "Trent" affair too — we surely need not have that miserable affair over again; beyond this, that we two old lawyers know that the parties to any strife

can't form a fair judgment themselves; and that Europe, if it may be held neutral, has decided in our favor; and that, after Mr. Seward has put an admission for U. S. on the record, it can hardly be right to argue further. If he meant, "I think you are wrong in England all the while, but it is not worth our while, now our hands are tied, to question your claim," he should have said so distinctly. If he did not say so, but something to the contrary, such men as Lowell should not, if they are wise, write,—

"The lion's paw is all the law,
According to J. B."

As I told ——— I will repeat to you: "There is, it is true, a strong feeling here, that your statesmen, by tradition, don't behave to us as if they were gentlemen." I dare say you will not deny this to be true as regards your Government before the present. But, as to Seward and this "Trent" business, there is also a strong feeling here that the old tradition is still intended to prevail. If he felt as he says he did, why not instantly disclaim Welles and the other approvers of the act? Why, by silence at least, encourage all the lawyers, &c., in your country, down to yourself even, to compose arguments the other way? Why lock up the two knaves who, he admits now, were still under our flag, and keep them till demand made? It was more like a low attorney, than a gentleman, to whisper to his client the President and United States, "We are in the wrong: it is trespass. But let us

wait, and see if England issues a writ." Our people here add to that speech, "We have bullied her often before without resistance: let us try it on again till she complains." As I told ——— so I do you: "You will never believe it. It looks too small a matter, and is too much under your very nose, to be seen. But nine-tenths of every difficulty between you and us arises from the feeling here that your Government does not mean to behave like gentlemen to England."

Now I come to the very important point on which you and I differ. How, in the interest of humanity and human progress and freedom, ought neutrals to behave towards rebels and towards the parent State? This is an all-important question for liberty, and for those who are under oppression. It is one at our doors here,—we being the one free, or the one of two free nations of Europe, and having tyrant neighbors enough, and nationalities enough oppressed and tyrannized over, at our ears almost. 1st, We must, to have a chance of remaining neutral, *rigidly follow, in all cases, the same rules*. 2d, As the rebels are right, and deserve all sympathy from us, in thirty-nine cases out of forty, we must try to have these rules as advantageous towards the minorities in rebellion as we can. Add to this, that God has put into the hearts of every one of us, for a good end obvious enough, a leaning to take the side of the weaker party, without sufficient reference to the merits of the quarrel. If you see a bigger boy thrashing a smaller one, you can't help such a feeling; though, likely enough, the small rascal

deserves twice what he will get. I can't deny, that, *because* of you (United States) not having put your ultimate objects of war on the record, there is a feeling here that you are, to a considerable extent, as yet fighting because you have been infamously treated, — for honor, that is, as in a duel. Now, I mean to affirm, that with these considerations before us, and with full knowledge, that, whatever course we took towards you, Europe would ever hereafter hold us to, in favor of the dominant authority and against the calcitrant minorities, we have swerved from our true line of duty towards rebels, and towards the freedom so often on this hemisphere to be won only by rebellion, by leanings towards the North in your struggle. I allude to selling you arms, &c., after your blockade; to acknowledging your blockade before it was really effectively formed (loyally, as I have said before, and with starvation staring Lancashire in the face); and to allowing your ships-of-war to come into our ports for supplies, &c., without question, and continuing to allow them, till the "Sumter" came and made it clear we could not do so longer without setting up a precedent mischievous ever after. On this subject, I will only add, "For goodness' sake, remember that international law is made up solely by precedents; and that Liberty herself calls on you and us, above all other nations, to set up and stick to such precedents as in the course of ages (and not for one time only) are most advantageous to her."

Another way I would put all this matter. To me

it is conclusive. Suppose the Southern plotters had contrived to keep the ascendancy; to spread slave States faster than you North States could free; and gradually to have encompassed you and overwhelmed you with their toils: ought not you to have rebelled, seceded, or call it what you please? You cannot say No: if you could, I would beseech you, by all that is to be valued, not to tell us so. You must have risen to a man, and fought as the South are fighting, but in a righteous cause, instead of a Devil's cause. Where would Lothrop Motley's arguments have been then? what their value? What course would you have expected from England then on the points you feel aggrieved about?

On the whole, when you can all come back to a state of mind allowing you to consider the matter impartially, you will, I feel confident, agree that it never does answer, in the long run, not to give even the Devil his due. On the contrary, if you know it is the Devil you have to do justice to, you must lean more strongly towards him, for fear your loathings should make you give him less than is his real title.

Another test for you. You can rarely find a guilty man without some lurking consciousness of his guilt. Most unquestionably we, one and all of us, here, believe we have been thoroughly without double-dealings or impropriety towards you. We believe not only the truth of the negative plea, "Not guilty," but we affirm ourselves entitled to the credit of unflinching loyalty under circumstances already involving us in

appalling trials. What is to happen to Lancashire, and, through its sides, to all our poor, I do not know; but this I do know, that we shall bear any evils of that sort, and almost any injustice of charges from you, before we shall ever enter into any fighting alliance with nigger-drivers.

Do, for the sake of the old Saxon blood in all our veins, have a little faith, and a little, little, charity, if your excitement, as is probable enough, will not let you be thoroughly just.

Here ends my long treatise. I have noticed nothing you say about your large army, and its being all volunteer in its attractive basis; nor any of the other signs of your gigantic power and will, to which you allude: because I have devoted all, and more than all, the patience you will be able to give me, to principles; and principles are greater than armies or continents. It is a great satisfaction to find you have broken your life-long resolution, and gone into your Legislature. The careful avoidance of political life hitherto practised so generally by the practical, educated, conservative gentlemen of your country, is surely an alarming sign of the tendency of universal suffrage. I (who was born a radical, of an old radical breed, and have lived on to an age now advancing) have always thought it of grave signification. I am sure, that, more than any thing else, the observations we have made of it have put an end, for many years to come, to the Reform-bill changes which had been, for some years past, maturing here. J. S. Mill's book on Representa-

tive Government, I dare say, you have seen. You will see marks of American influences throughout it, moderating his older views.

Your account of your son, your cousins, and your family changes because of the war, are full of interest. That they will all, and that the war also will, be of the highest value in the results upon character, I do not doubt; but that the war will long continue to be carried on merely to negative the right of secession, I cannot believe, and do devoutly hope will not be the case. We here are at least lookers-on, and impartial on that point; and, with every leaning on every other point towards the North, we say, from the bottom of our convictions, "To fight merely for that, is, at the mildest, a lamentable mistake."

Your letter shall go to the Judges you name, and to Mr. — — also, at whose house, you remember, we dined together. If my answer had been of any moderate length, and my handwriting legible, I would have sent — — this letter also, in the hope that he might have added a line at the foot of it, saying (as I don't doubt he and every other experienced and impartial lawyer, and man of the world, among us would say) that I have not untruly, on the whole, represented English thoughts and feelings.

Don't let any names be used which ought not. Subject to that restriction, make any use of this letter you please, if of use it be capable; and believe me always most sincerely yours.

EDWIN W. FIELD.

Hon. CHARLES G. LORING, Esq., Boston, U. S.

IV.

BOSTON, June 23, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I should have replied long ago to your certainly very clever answer to what you term my "indictment, and speech for the prosecution, both in one," but from an unavoidable pressure of other engagements when it was received, and a personal disaster following, which came exceedingly near to relieving you from ever hearing from me again, and from which I have not yet recovered. Indeed, this is the third or fourth time I have essayed to write; but my brain soon refused its office, and compelled me to desist.

Your letter was to us particularly interesting, as presenting a view so entirely English, of the struggle in which we are engaged, and thus accounting, in some measure, for the general sympathy of your countrymen, or one class of them, with the cause of the rebels; which is to us an occasion of so much wonder and mingled disappointment and grief. You must allow me, however, to say (in the frankness which I am pleased to see that you accord with me in desiring should characterize this correspondence), that, in technical phrase, it would be bad upon demurrer, as not responsive to the charges in the bill. I, of course, do not attribute this to any desire on your part to

evade them: it is quite satisfactorily accounted for by the different stand-points from which we view the subject; and by the circumstance, that you look upon it as a mere matter of philosophical or political speculation, while to me it has an interest nothing less than that of national life or death, and of the final solution of the question of the possibility of free government, founded upon the equality of the natural rights of man, — or, if not final, at least for the next century or longer.

If you will recur to my letter, you will perceive that I did not complain because your countrymen entertained the opinion, that it was best for the Free States to be separated from the Southern, as a speculative opinion, founded upon any of the political, moral, or philosophical grounds, or principles of ethics, or of statesmanship, which are so ably set forth in your letter, and upon which alone I have no doubt that you, and many like you, desire that the separation may take place. I did not complain of this, though it is obviously the same thing in substance as desiring the success of the rebels in the contest; for, as things are, the end desired — the separation — can by no possibility be otherwise accomplished. Nor did I complain because of any *professed neutrality* of your *people* towards the two contending parties: though candor compels me to say, that, in view of the nature and avowed causes of the Rebellion, of the manner in which it has been conducted, and of the real issues which every reflecting man, who will consider the subject, must see to be involved in regard to the maintenance of established

government and law, such opinions and such *neutrality of feeling* are to us somewhat marvellous, — indeed, to one understanding the realities of the case, entirely incomprehensible. We cannot but feel, that an honest man, beset in his own house by thieves and assassins, might, without the imputation of great want of magnanimity or good temper, consider that he had cause for subsequent alienation, at the least, from a neighbor or friend, who, standing by during the struggle, should profess entire neutrality of feeling in such a matter, or indifference as to which party should prevail; or who should express at the moment active sympathy for the assailants, and wish them success, on the assumed ground, that greater good would probably result, even to the party attacked, from his being obliged to surrender his property, than from his being permitted to retain it, — however honest such assumption might be.

But my complaint was, that the *general tone of feeling and sentiment* of the British people towards the Government and people of the United States was one of bitter hostility and of avowed scorn and contempt, evidencing that the general desire on their part for the breaking-up of our Union (which desire you admit to be generally prevalent) was not founded on the principles and opinions which influence you, and perhaps many who think with you, but upon animosity and hatred, distrust and contempt, wholly unexpected by us, and, as we think, wholly unwarranted by the recent intercourse between the two nations, and at variance with the friendship exhibited by our countrymen to-

wards yours. As evidence of this, I alluded to the almost universal utterances of your press, in its periodical literature as well as in its daily gazettes, from the aristocratic quarterlies down to the most vulgar and radical of its issues, teeming with misrepresentations of our people and their institutions and conduct, exulting in our disasters, depreciating our successes and resources, and filled with raven prophecies of our future ; — to the unfriendly feelings manifested in public and in society towards us and our cause, which drive loyal Americans from England ; — and to the favor shown to the rebels and their emissaries throughout your land. This has been strikingly exhibited in the cordial reception given to the rebel picaroons and their officers in your ports in England and in the Colonies ; and in the strongly contrasted coldness, if not insult, manifested towards our national vessels and their officers.

Nor did I complain of the *alleged neutrality* of your *Government*, which you seem to think so clear, and so honorable to it under the *temptations* to which it was exposed. My complaint was, that your Government was *not* justly neutral, and not so considerate as a *friendly* Government should have been towards an ancient friend and neighbor threatened with what seemed at least sudden and entire overthrow and destruction, and so threatened not by a people seeking escape from an intolerable tyranny, but by a band of conspirators seeking avowedly the extension and perpetuation of slavery. I complained that your

Government *precipitately hastened* to acknowledge the rebels as a belligerent power, and thus to give to them, for all the purposes of war, *full standing as one of the established nations*, before any time could have elapsed for determining whether there was a probability that they could sustain themselves in the outset of their enterprise. The Queen's proclamation was issued, if I mistake not, within a fortnight or three weeks after your first reception of the news that the rebels had actually commenced war, and while Mr. Adams, the first minister from Mr. Lincoln's administration, was yet on his passage to England; consequently, before it was possible to know the views of our Government through its accredited agent (a most marked and significant discourtesy); — before it was possible to know whether the rebels could or could not sustain themselves, even on the first spot where they had instituted the conflict; — and long before they could have (or there was reason to believe that they could, if ever, have) a single ship of war upon the ocean to present the only kind of case in which the principle, thus eagerly announced, could be applied. This at once neutralized, as your statesmen must have known that it would, and must therefore be supposed to have intended that it should, the otherwise great and righteous power we possessed of treating them, according to our own express statutes, as rebels and pirates; and, without this early recognition of belligerent right, they would never have dared to set an armed vessel afloat. That ac-

knowledge was rightly considered by the Slave States as the first great step, and indeed the *utmost that could then be taken* by your Government, towards the acknowledgment of their independence, which they have ever since so confidently relied upon. The encouragement this gave has been their chief support; and, without it, the contest, as we believe, would have been of comparatively short duration.

I complained, too, that this want of *real* neutrality, or rather this real, not to say avowed, sympathy of your Government with the rebels, was further manifested by the declaration of Earl Russell, its mouth-piece, (and very recently reiterated in substance by Mr. Gladstone in Parliament,) that the contest here is one “for *empire on the part of the North*, and for *independence on the part of the South* ;” to us a misrepresentation so palpable, that we can no otherwise account for it but upon the belief of ill-concealed enmity, or not less unpardonable voluntary blindness. To say, that a *National* Government, of the mildest and most paternal character that ever existed (which the rebels themselves, up to the time of their revolt, had entirely controlled, and boasted of controlling, and whose constitution and laws had by them been directed, not to say perverted, to the almost exclusive protection of their peculiar interests, and which they rebelled against for the openly avowed and exclusive purpose of extending and perpetuating negro-chattel slavery, and because their political ascendancy, in its periodical administration, was partially

reduced), is *fighting for empire*, when attempting to subdue such atrocious conspiracy and treason against government, law, and humanity ; and to say, that conspirators, fighting, and seducing, by systematic falsehood, deluded, ignorant masses of people to fight with them, for the sake of extending and perpetuating a despotism of slavery, are contending for independence ; —and thus to attribute to the Free States a base or unjustifiable love of power, and a desire injuriously to extend empire over unwilling subjects ; and to characterize the Slave States as a people merely struggling for freedom, and escape from oppression, (for such is the obvious and unquestionable import and influence of the declaration.) —is a perversion of truth, so glaring, that, if it be not conclusive of strong hostility, it is at least evidence of a willingness to be deceived, falling little if any thing short of it ; while the senile declaration of Lord Brougham, which just reaches us, that our “ *whole people* are frantic with mutual hatred, *filled with a thirst of vengeance only to be slaked by each other's slaughter*,” and his commentary upon “ *the tendency of aristocracies to preserve peace, and the unbounded calamities overwhelming the State bent under the yoke of the multitude*,” are equally noticeable, as portraying the pitiable ignorance, or something worse, of the leaders of your aristocracy, in regard to a great people struggling to save itself from degradation and ruin, and to rescue the cause of government, liberty, and humanity, from an overthrow, of which the consequences would be felt for ages

throughout the civilized world. You know, and all well-informed Englishmen ought to know, that the people of the Free States, so far from being “frantic with hatred, and filled with a thirst of vengeance only to be slaked by slaughter,” have been almost unaccountably calm, unimpassioned, and mild in the conduct of the war. There may be frenzy and “hatred” enough on the part of the South, stimulated as it is by the industrious lies of its leaders. There are no such feelings in the North. This is so manifest, as everywhere to cause surprise; and was noticed by Mr. Russell, no great friend of this country.

Our people have moved in this matter with no appearance of popular rage, and with no excitement other than that of firm resolution and an unflinching purpose to put down the Rebellion at all hazards. The rebels, indeed, have exhibited that frantic rage, and “thirst for vengeance,” which is not satisfied even with the death of its victims; and, in very many instances, they have exhibited themselves in scarcely a better light than that of cannibals, — the natural fruit of slavery, of which I send you evidence. But no such feeling has been shown by the people of the Free States, nor have their soldiers been guilty of any conduct justifying the imputation of inhumanity in the carrying-on of the war. Individual instances of depredations, promptly suppressed and punished, are the most that can be found to be justly complained of in the conduct of our troops. See the contrast in

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our sending boats to save the drowning rebels, who had left their sinking gunboat off Memphis; and in their soon afterwards, in another engagement, firing grape and canister upon our scalded men (who had jumped overboard from one of our vessels whose steam-boiler had been pierced), and upon our boats sent to their rescue, so long as one remained above water.

Nor was my complaint, about the Trent affair, that your Government, under its alleged construction of the law of nations, claimed the restitution of traitors, who, under your flag, were bent upon the destruction of their own; though I must be permitted to say, that in view of its past history, and especially in relation to this country, and of the causes that led to the war between us in 1812, it seemed, and still seems, a very marvellous conversion to a faith not before practised upon, if professed, — were it not that circumstances must always be allowed to alter cases; and those of *Bullum vs. Boatum*, and *Boatum vs. Bullum*, although founded upon facts identical, always from the beginning of time have been, and to its end probably will be, essentially different in the eyes of the different parties. (But more of this presently. I have a word to say about the comparatively “gentlemanly” course of the two Governments on the subject, about which we differ quite as essentially as on some other points.) But what I did complain of, and adduce as evidence of settled hostility, anxious to seek occasion for offence, and opportunity of deadly injury, was

the eagerness with which *your people, goading on your Government* (which, if it had happened here, my Lord Brougham would doubtless have grieved over as the “tendency of democratic rule,” needing the control of an aristocracy), upon the first suggestion of a pretence for war, or imagination of intended insult, — without waiting a moment for opportunity of explanation, disavowal, or apology, — with a seeming “frantic” rage, rushed to arms to hurl upon us a sudden conflict, which, they could not but believe, would, in our crippled and apparently helpless condition, crush us for ever to the earth. I think that this conduct has sunk more deeply into our hearts than all the rest, — the apparently crowning proof of that total want of friendship, or rather of that hostility, towards us in the hour of our extremity, and that desire for the destruction of our national existence, which seem in all else so manifest. Nor will it, as we believe, stand in history as more creditable to the courage and magnanimity of the British nation, than to her asserted neutrality in this contest.

These, my dear friend, are the grievances complained of in my letter; and I do not perceive that you have undertaken to deny them or to answer them, otherwise than by a very able and elaborate assignment of other reasons than those of hostility, jealousy, or unfriendly feelings, for the desire (which you admit to be entertained by all, or nearly all, of your countrymen) of a separation of the Free from the Slave States, and a consequent want of sympathy with the former in

this struggle : which desire is evidently the same thing as a desire for the destruction of our existing nationality, and the subversion of our Government ; for by no possibility can separation otherwise be accomplished or exist.

Your suggestions that no credit should be given to the utterances of newspapers, and your citations of the “ New-York Herald ” as giving equal proof of hostility on our part towards England, you will permit me to say, fall very far short of meeting the evidence derived from the press of your country. If the misrepresentations, disparagement, and scorn heaped upon us, and the exultation in our disasters, were from only a single newspaper like the “ New-York Herald,” — adapted chiefly to the low Irish of New York, — or even from a few only of your gazettes, or of your higher and more authoritative periodicals, it might perhaps be thought that we drew unwarrantable conclusions in charging the entertainment of these feelings and sentiments upon the people generally. But, unfortunately, it is not so ; for the *few, very few*, newspapers or periodicals which speak of us otherwise, or in any sympathetic or friendly tone, are marked exceptions : and it is not deniable, that the general, long-continued tone and temper of the press, in all departments, in a free country, is conclusive evidence of the general tone and temper of the people by whose support alone it lives. You were rather unfortunate in your selection of the “ New-York Herald ” as a like exponent of the feelings of the Free States towards England

(though perhaps the mention of that paper is not attributable so much to your choice as to the necessity of the case ; it being, I believe, the only publication here of that nature) ; inasmuch as no one here doubts that it is still, as it was at the breaking-out of the war, secretly in the interest, if not in the direct pay, of the South ; and that its diatribes against England are for the very purpose of exciting hostility between your Government and our own, as the most effective means of accomplishing the success of the Rebellion,—a purpose which it takes care artfully to disguise under a great show of patriotic bluster.

I am, therefore, compelled to the conclusion, as seemingly inevitable, that, however satisfactorily the reasons you assign may account for the opinions and feelings of many like yourself, and however they may be the basis of, or mingle with, those of a still more numerous class less friendly to us, or may serve as an excuse for the general deportment of your Government and people, they weigh almost nothing in contrast with the proofs thus exhibited of the general national unfriendliness, and, to a great extent, of a national bitter hostility, of which we complain. Of the true foundations of that hostility, of which you have, I think, *quite unconsciously* struck one of the key-notes, I shall presently attempt some explanation ; and some of the present causes of which, if I am right in my views, I think will cease when our Government shall have triumphed, as I have no manner of doubt that it will, in fully reinstating its national sovereignty.

Before doing this, I wish, as briefly as possible, to consider the reasons assigned by you for your opinions, feelings, and desire in reference to the contest in which this country is involved.

But I have, I fear, already occupied as much of your time and patience as you can afford for one sitting, and will defer what I have to say on that topic to another opportunity.

Ever faithfully yours,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq., London.

P.S. — Since writing the above, I lament to add further evidence, since received, of the unfriendly feeling of your Government and governing classes towards us, in the recent ebullitions in Parliament concerning General Butler's proclamation ; a measure ill advised as to its phraseology undoubtedly, which is in very bad taste (as obnoxious to an interpretation which might be put upon it, though only by those to whom the motto applies, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, but which, I should have thought, no rational man could believe was intended), while the measure itself, in its practical application, has not produced one inconvenience even, but much real good.

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But, if the proclamation be censurable, the provocation was extreme, and personal to the General himself, and to his officers and soldiers down to the humblest private.

How long, I would ask of these self-appointed national *censores morum*, was it to be endured, that high-toned gentlemen (and there are many such in that army, and honest soldiers, and among them numbers of men of great respectability and in good position at home, accustomed to be treated, and to treat others, with decorum, and especially to treat women with habitual deference and delicacy, and who have left wives, mothers, and sisters, and are perilling their lives, from a sense of duty to God and their country) should be spit at in the streets and from windows; have opprobrious epithets muttered as they passed, and contemptuous grimaces and gestures made to them when met, with the gathering-up of skirts, as if remote contact with the uniform they are proud to wear as a national badge were contamination; and be saluted with insulting songs as they approached within hearing! — and all this from “ladies,” as they called themselves, and as some were reputed!

Whatever opinion may be entertained concerning the taste or expediency of such a proclamation, the women at whom it was directed, and who thus placed themselves on the platform of demireps, have no cause of complaint, and, it is pleasant to know, have

felt the sarcasm, and mended their ways, but suffered no other inconvenience from it.

I suppose that I should be esteemed, by most of your horrified countrymen, as guilty of an atrocious plebeian *scandalum magnatum* in saying, that the exhibition in that debate would be esteemed among us simply a piece of gratuitous impertinence, were it not for its obvious tendency and apparent design to fan the flames of ill-will and contempt for us as an ignoble people, — the cherished notion among your aristocracy, which already sufficiently pervades the English mind towards this country, and which, as all foreign wars grow out of excited feelings far more frequently than from conflicting principles or even diverse interests, it seems more desirable to moderate than to encourage.

I might, I think, allude with much justice, in connection with this topic, to many things in the conduct of your countrymen in the late Chinese wars, in the suppression of the uprising in India, and elsewhere in *not distant history*, which those who throw stones might be warned in prudence to remember; but I forbear, because it would give me no pleasure, and because I wish, as far as the subjects of discussion will possibly admit, to avoid all semblance of personality.

But I may certainly ask, and with emphasis too, how happens it that this proclamation of an individual officer, however offensive it may be considered, from which no one has suffered any thing but mortification from the

sarcasm it conveys, at the worst a mere *brutum fulmen*, should thus excite the indignation of your rulers and Parliamentary orators, and be held up as involving our *Government* and *Nation* in disgrace, and lead to suggestions of *remonstrance on the part of your Government*, (Heaven save the mark!) while the barbarities of the "*acknowledged belligerents*," in murdering wounded soldiers, as they have done after almost every battle; in mutilating and disgracing the remains of the dead, and converting their bones into ornaments for their female friends, and, in more than one instance, their skulls into drinking-cups; in poisoning wells, and leaving poisoned food in their deserted camps; in depositing torpedoes and shells, with locks attached, in their tents and furniture, and under ground in their abandoned fortifications; in shooting prisoners of war in their jails, innocent of offence, for merely approaching to look out of the windows; and their other atrocities daily committed, and not denied,—how is it that these shocking acts pass not only uncensured, but unnoticed? And what inference *must we draw from it*?

I send by this post a Report of a Committee of Congress upon the atrocities perpetrated by the rebels, which is authentic proof of some of them; also a copy of the "National Intelligencer," containing a criticism on Lord Brougham's recent remarks on our war and institutions, and also containing a speech of a North-Carolinian, Mr. Stanley, now military governor of that State; — to all which I invite your attention.

V.

JUNE 26, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In approaching the consideration of your reasons for the suggested expediency and desirableness of the severance of our Union and the disruption of our Government, I must premise (not relying merely upon your candor to appreciate the freedom of the remark, but also upon its bearing upon the argument), that it is matter of constant observation and marvel to us Americans, how difficult, or rather how impossible, it seems to be for one of your countrymen to appreciate, I might perhaps say to comprehend, the nature and working of our Government. Its novelty in political history, and its complexity, as consisting of *one* imperial, and, *for all national purposes, sovereign* power, embracing numerous members equally sovereign, and independent of it in certain municipal and other subordinate capacities and functions, doubtless account for this in a great measure ; though other causes, hereafter to be adverted to, creating disinclination, not to say disgust, and a certain degree of contempt, for the study of American politics, are strongly operative in this as in other evil influences against us. And I believe it to be one of the great blessings to come from this fiery trial, — in which I cannot but rejoice

(though in sadness for its multiplied miseries), as sent no less in mercy than in judgment, — that the nature, ends, and power of the Union will henceforth be better appreciated abroad as well as at home, and command that consideration and respect which its peaceful history seems to have failed to secure.

Now, I have no doubt that you understand this subject better than nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand and nine hundred and ninety-nine of your countrymen, — perhaps, and for aught I know, as well as the very best informed among them: and yet you, looking at what you assume to be differences in character between the people of the Free and those of the Slave States (which differences you esteem vitally destructive of all harmonious union between them), “*wonder that we are not anxious to let them go*”; consider it natural enough that we should wish to punish them for their perfidy and rascality, but “*incomprehensible how we can desire to do so in order to continue them as equals and partners*”; think it would be highly praiseworthy in us “*to narrow their boundaries, secure the command of the Mississippi, cut them off from the Territories, and reclaim as much of the Border States as possible from the dominion of the Devil,*” and that this would call down the plaudits of all Europe; — but for us “to avow that we fight only to put down a rebellion,” is to admit, you think, that “there is nothing in the elemental principles of policy at the North and at the South to prevent their re-union”; and you are of opinion, that if we say, “We fight to main-

tain the Constitution," we should remember "that it was made with hands, and not to be worshipped as eternal," and that "*forms of government*, like forms of belief, vary, and are meant to vary, from age to age"; that, to have the sympathy of Europe, we must say that the men of the South "*are, not rebels, but enemies, whom we will fight to the death and à outrance; and whom, till they renounce, and from their hearts disclaim, their Devil's doctrine of the right divine of White sovereignty, we will never, no, never, take to be the partners of our bosom again.*" And you say, that, "*for one, you devoutly hope*, not in the interest of England, but of humanity, that the tendency of this civil war may be to divide us into different governments and nations;" and you state your belief that "all England, and certainly all our best friends there, wish to see us clear of the South."

Now, my friend, for us to do, or to avow that we are fighting to accomplish, any one of these things, which you wonder that we are not doing, or avowing our design to do, would be, *ipso facto*, an abandonment and renunciation of our whole nationality; would for ever terminate our existence as a nation; and would break us up into as many fragments, at the least, as we now have separate States, — and into how many more, as constituting the political chaos into which we should instantly fall, God only, in his omniscience, can foresee. This is our great point. We *know it to be true*; and we perceive that it is one which no Englishman has seen, or, at least, appeared to comprehend. Can I make it plain to you?

Our *national existence*, our *only unity as a nation*, is founded, and rests wholly, upon a certain written compact, called the Constitution. We have no other bond of union than this. For us to violate, or attempt to violate, the rights of any one State, secured to it by the Constitution, — as we should do by such acts or avowals as you propose, — is at once to release the citizens of that State from all obligations under our compact of nationality, and to authorize it, as matter of legal and moral right, to abjure the Union, our only national bond ; and would be a self-confessed disregard of our reciprocal obligations as members of the nation, which would virtually and practically destroy our existence as such. No State, nor any number of States, can be permitted to separate from the others, and disavow the joint constitutional authority of the whole, unless in the manner provided by that Constitution, without immediate and entire national disintegration : for, if one or several may, each and every one may ; and there would remain no longer a nation, but an incoherent aggregate of political atoms, without consistency, or power for any effective national purpose. No national policy could be instituted, or remain permanent or efficient ; no national law would be imperative ; no power, no treaty, be binding upon any known number of subjects, or extent of territory ; and our nationality, which alone can secure us from foreign aggression and internal commotions, would cease to exist, or be nothing more than a rope of sand. All that could be hoped for would be the formation of another

Union of the citizens of the remaining States : but who can suppose, that with all their diversities of territorial extent, population, position, character, and interests, a new and complete voluntary union could be accomplished among these ? or who but a madman would throw away our present national life upon such a venture, or think any sacrifice of wealth, comfort, or blood, too great to save us from the unutterable, if not endless, misery and ruin which would follow ?

It is in seeming oversight or forgetfulness of all this, that you tell me that we taught you the lesson, that there is no such thing as "gigantic rebellion," when we separated ourselves from the mother-country ; and that England would be willing that the Canadas should form themselves into independent States, or unite with us, if they should elect so to do : appearing to think, that for us to allow the Slave States to separate from the Union at their pleasure, would be the same thing as for England to allow any of her Colonies to become independent nationalities. The difference, however, is most obvious. In any such case, the nationality of England would remain unimpaired. She would lose, it is true, a portion of her subjects and of her territory ; but the residue would still remain the same nation, under the same Imperial Government. On the other hand, for us to admit the right of any one State thus, against the terms of the Constitution and the consent of the rest, to abjure its allegiance, would be to admit the right of every other State to do so too, and at once to dissolve and scatter to the winds the only bond

of our nationality. If, after we shall have subdued this infernal Rebellion, any of the Slave States shall apply to be released from the Union in the manner pointed out in the Constitution itself for making amendments thereto, then will be the time to consider that question : it might be possible, in that way, to assent, without shaking the whole fabric to pieces. But so long as they claim the *adverse right* to do so of their own mere will, and attempt to force us into submission to the demand, our national existence requires of us that we resist, to the last dollar and the last man.

This is with us an article of faith at least ; and we should fight upon it against a world in arms, — yielding to nothing but supreme and irresistible force, — just upon the principle on which an individual man fights for his life.

A case more nearly approaching to ours than those you thus suggest, but still widely different, would be the rebellion of Ireland or Scotland or Wales, or some one or more of your great counties, claiming the right to separate, at their own pleasure, from the Imperial Government, and to establish themselves as independent empires. Are you prepared to say, that you or your countrymen would assent to it, even if all the people of those districts desired it ? Still more, are you prepared to say, that the nation would, or ought to, assent to it, when it was perfectly apparent, that this declaration of independence was not the act or intelligent desire of the great body of the people of the revolting district, but the movement of a small

band of conspirators among them, (consulting their own selfish and odious interests,) who by circumstances had acquired the political control of the whole body, and induced great numbers of ignorant men to follow and join them in arms by every species of falsehood and misrepresentation concerning the action and designs of the Imperial Government? Let the history of Ireland answer these questions. And yet you could assent to this with as much self-respect and propriety, and quite as much security, as we can assent to the enforced separation of the Slave States from our National Government. Indeed, you could do it with vastly greater safety: for even then your *National Government* would still exist; your sovereignty would be unimpaired, and would lose none of its authority over the remaining territories and their inhabitants; because that Government is not theoretically nor practically founded on any express compact, or composed of distinct members, the citizens of which are voluntarily united under one superior controlling power, — whereas our National Government is expressly so founded and formed, and it is only by denying the right of secession at will that it can continue to exist as a national sovereignty.

In the light, therefore, of the *compact* which constitutes the *essence* of our nationality, fusing the citizens of several distinct States into *one* for all *national* purposes, (which compact, as its basis, distinguishes it from every other case of national union depending upon historical association, right of conquest, treaty,

confederation, or other form of unity and dominion,) it is, I think, very clear that we have now no alternative whatsoever but to surrender our national life, or to compel the rebels to submission.

It is not to be inferred, however, because our nationality rests upon express compact between the citizens of political bodies, which were previously to all intents, and still are, *quasi* sovereignties for certain internal and municipal purposes, — and because this nationality must be regulated and controlled by the terms of that compact, in the construction of its scope, powers, and obligations, and the obligations of its members, — that we have none of the other bonds of connection and sympathy which bind the citizens of other nations to each other and to their respective governments. Although thus separated into diverse municipalities, each independent in its own sphere, we have not come into our present national life by any arbitrary combination, or merely voluntary association: we grew into it, just as Great Britain slowly grew to be the nation she is. Our growth and progress as a nation have been by natural increase, in the same manner in which she and all other great nations have gradually expanded from small beginnings into a powerful people. We have grown to this condition with all the corresponding sympathies, consciousness of mutual dependence and interest, and loyalty to the supreme power, (until disturbed by the Slaveholders' Conspiracy,) which can alone form a real and happy union.

We are essentially a homogeneous people ; quite as much so as, I might say more so than, the various populations which constitute the British Empire.

We started with only thirteen feeble and sparsely inhabited States, and with a population of about three millions ; and the twenty-one *new* States have not joined us after becoming themselves distinct and powerful communities having a foreign origin ; but have sprung from our loins, and been raised under our nurture and care as Territorial children, until, having attained to sufficient strength and maturity to take their positions as equals in the family circle, they have been admitted as such : while the population of the *old* States, increasing with unexampled rapidity, has peopled these new States and these Territories from the common stock, mingled with foreign elements, until the present population of twenty-seven millions and more of whites is as homogeneous as that of any other great nation on earth, and as firmly united, with the exception above stated, in national sentiment and loyalty.

And no nation ever gave greater proof of its consciousness of such mutual interests, sympathy, and loyalty to its Government, than the people of the Free States (comprising nearly three-fourths of the free population of the whole nation, and more than nine-tenths of those capable of appreciating their own interests and the nature of a free Government) have shown in this struggle ; in which they have risen as one man to defend the Government, and the honor and inviolability of the national flag, — to defend and

maintain them to the end, as they will, come what may. For, when the marvellous truth shall be told, history will show that this whole vast Rebellion is actually the work of a small portion only of about *two or three hundred thousand* slaveholders out of the twenty-seven millions of free citizens of the United States. A few ambitious and unprincipled conspirators among these slaveholders have stirred up a large part of them, as a class, to this Rebellion, for the perpetuity and propagation of slavery, as a means of perpetuating their own political power, and preserving their own miserable property in human flesh against the moral assaults of the whole civilized world; and the slaveholders, as a class (only three hundred thousand of them in all, owning each from one or two slaves to a thousand or more), being thus stirred up, have succeeded for a while in deceiving and deluding the miserable *poor whites* (whom they rule, and whose condition in the Slave States is to a great extent, if not generally, worse than that of the slave, and must ever so continue as long as slavery endures) into the belief that the Free States are seeking to reduce *them* to slavery, by placing them upon an equality with the blacks, and making them together the “hewers of wood and drawers of water” for the North.

This is the whole final cause of the Rebellion: and our war, though it unavoidably embraces all rebels in arms, is really and in principle not against the States or people of the South, but against a portion of these

three hundred thousand slaveholders, whose political power it is necessary to overthrow and suppress, without refusing to the people of those States any absolute rights which the Constitution secures to them ; among which is that of regulating their own right of property, within their own territorial jurisdiction, according to their own municipal laws, so long as these do not contravene any express provision of the National Constitution. We cannot make war upon *slavery* as such, because it exists only by the municipal law of the State in which it is, and unhappily is not prohibited to the several States by the terms of the Constitution, which leaves each State free to make its own internal laws. But we can and do make war to coerce to obedience the slaveholders who have proved to be traitors and rebels, and therefore, in one sense, public enemies, though citizens and subjects. We must first effectually beat, and break up, their armed array, whatever number of deluded adherents it may embrace. That done, counter-revolution is sure, as we believe, to follow among the people of the Slave States themselves, awakened to a knowledge of the miserable deceptions which have been practised upon them. The conspirators who have misled them will be discarded as political leaders ; healthier influences will gradually prevail ; the Union will be restored ; and at last we have reason to hope that slavery itself may be abolished in State after State, by the act of its own people, encouraged and aided by the National Government. Such is our theory of the war, and the probable

consequences of success to the national arms. At any rate, how can we but strive for it to the utmost, when the alternative is our ruin and destruction as a nation, — to say nothing of the establishment by our side of that monster, a separate republic, founded upon the perpetuation of slavery?

Your next suggestion is, that, if we were fighting “*to hold them in subjugation*,” we should have the sympathy of Europe: but you warn us that this would be a bad speculation, as illustrated in your subjugation of Ireland, causing you four hundred years of trouble and vexation, hardly yet quieted; and in the occupation of Rome by the French, which causes so much embarrassment. But it is obvious that the same objections as I have already stated, exist to any such mode of proceeding.

To hold the citizens of the revolted States as mere foreign enemies, occupying territories belonging to them, which we are to acquire by conquest, (instead of accounting them as rebels,) would be to consider and treat them as having ceased, by their own voluntary action, to be citizens of the United States; and so would be a tacit, if not express, admission that they had thus been able to break the bond of Union, by converting themselves from citizens into foreign foes; and that the citizens of other States, by a similar course, might acquire the *status* of independent sovereignties or foreign enemies, to be restored to the Union only as conquered territories. We *must* treat them as *rebellious citizens*, entitled as such, on submission, to the restoration of

all their constitutional rights, or else we renounce all claim, legal or moral, to their allegiance, — and so admit that our nationality, which rests upon the compact they are violating, may be voluntarily or forcibly dissolved at the will of any one or more of the parties to it.

But, my dear friend, laying aside the considerations founded upon the peculiarities of our national organization and political institutions (which, however substantial and of inevitable obligation in our view, may seem to any but an American more or less artificial or technical), if we look upon our position from the stand-point common to all national governments, however originated or founded, we cannot shut out of view the right and obligation of self-protection to be exerted by governments for the safety and welfare of all their subjects, including those in revolt. Our duty in this emergency is equally as manifest to us as the similar duty is to all other governments. We think our case, in this respect, needs only to be understood to be universally admitted. Should we, for the moment, overlook the effect of our written Constitution, and consider our nationality as having no other foundation or bond than the simple facts of an existing National Government, certain peculiarities of boundaries or position, and certain historical associations, like those of all other countries, including your own,

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we have assuredly no other safety or hope of future *peace and security for any one of the loyal States* but in the preservation of this nationality complete and unbroken.

Suppose that the Slave States should prevail in this struggle, or, being permitted to secede, should establish one or more independent confederacies, or governments of whatever form, (thus having command of the mouth of the Mississippi, and of the large extent of territory bordering on that river and the Ohio and their tributaries, and the command of the Gulf of Mexico, and the possession of the coast of Florida and the Tortugas, and other dependent islands,—the keys to all the navigation between the other Atlantic States and the West Indies, and all south of them,) what would be the condition of the Free States, supposing them to continue united? what their security against constant encroachment, aggression, and insult upon their commerce? and what possibility could there be of any continued peace or security, or of long submission to the consequent restrictions upon their mercantile freedom and growth, or to the power to impose such restrictions? If there were no other causes for jealousy, hatred, and contention, than those found in such relative positions and conditions, constant and desolating wars by sea and land would, according to the teachings of all history, be the inevi-

table consequence, even supposing the populations of the two sections of Slave and Free States to be thoroughly homogeneous, or not more heterogeneous than those of European nations ordinarily are, compared with their next-door neighbor.

But there would enter here another element also of irritation, jealousy, and collision, still more fatal. Slavery, reigning supreme and uncontrolled in the Slave Empire, unchecked by any higher civilization than that it admits of, and demanding constant extension as essential to its continuance and prosperity, would augment the baseness, perfidy, and ferocity of the Southern character, so lamentably shown in this war to be its natural fruit ;—would accelerate the progress of social tyranny, essential for its maintenance, alike over the white man and the black, until it would culminate in a military despotism, intensifying the jealousies, distrust, and hatred of the people on either side ;—would give perpetual cause of collision in questions concerning the escape and surrender of fugitive slaves, and the extension or regulation of boundaries ;—and would render the support of large standing armies and navies the only condition of even tolerable peace or security. And to this is to be added the certainty of alliances between European maritime powers and the Slave States, rendered necessary for these by their inability to maintain a navy, or cope with that of the Free Atlantic States ; for which alliances compensation would be required in peculiar privileges or benefits injurious to the commerce and prosperity

of the Free States, and soon to involve them in foreign war with other nations also.

Or suppose that the Cotton States alone were allowed to secede and become independent: they would, of course, have the entire right to throw themselves into the arms of any foreign power which might be induced to form an alliance with them or take them under protection, or with whom they might elect to unite themselves as parts of its empire; and would thus place in foreign hands, by legal right, the command of the Mississippi and its tributaries, the Gulf, the Florida coast, and the navigation of the Atlantic. And is there any thing in the history of the great European powers most immediately interested, or in the dispositions manifested by them in this contest, or any thing in human nature, as manifested in the love of national power, to make it doubtful how soon such alliance, protection, or absorption, would take place?

We believe that no clearer proposition can be stated, than that, owing to the geographical arrangement of the country we occupy (its mountain ranges and its rivers excluding all possibility of natural national barriers), and the peculiarities of its seacoast, it is essential, alike to internal peace and prosperity and to security from foreign enemies, that it should ever be under one National Government; — and that this necessity is immeasurably increased by the existence among us of that accursed system of slavery prevailing in one portion of it (entailed upon us by your Government as one of its colonial institutions, our only

woe), whose extinction, in the manner most for the interest of the slave as well as of the master, can only be under the controlling influence of a civilization superior to any which can exist where it remains under no other control than that of slave-owners, or abettors of the system.

The necessity, therefore, we are under of carrying on this war for the subjugation of the rebels, to compel their return to their allegiance, is clearly, we think, absolute ; growing alike out of our peculiar political organizations as a nation, and the fact of our existence as one ; and founded on those principles of policy, humanity, and right, upon which all national sovereignties rest their obligation and their power to compel the obedience of rebellious subjects.

I had hoped to conclude in this letter my replies to the views advocated by you, of the feasibility and desirableness of the disintegration of our National Government ; but I am unable to do so, as its already seemingly unconscionable length leads me to fear that it will have exhausted your patience. I shall do so in my next, and then enter upon my defence to “ the indictment, and speech for the prosecution,” made by you against my own people and Government.

Ever faithfully yours,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq.

VI.

BOSTON, July 10, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In reply to your arguments in vindication of your wish that our Union may be destroyed, and one or more separate nationalities take its place, (founded upon the hypothesis, that it would be best for us to be thus relieved from the burthen of maintaining a house divided against itself, and that national, moral, and intellectual progress and freedom would flourish better under the subdivision and the consequent competition,) it is perhaps enough to say, that, whatever course it might be wise for us to pursue, if our country were in our hands an unorganized territory, to be parcelled out according to our notions of national policy, this is not now an open question. I have already shown, I trust, the utter impracticability of any such division *now*, (consistently with any present or prospective peace or security, internal or external,) owing to the geographical features of our territory, and our existing political organization, which cannot be broken up without severing us into, not two or three only, but thirty-four or more, fragmentary nationalities, the re-union of which, or of any portion of which, would be a problem too hazardous for any rational man to venture upon, if it could possibly be avoided. But if the question were an open

one, and it were left for us to decide upon the political organizations among which power should be distributed, I should maintain, that, laying aside the disturbance caused by this infernal system of slavery (our only woe, — a woe inherited as one of the cherished colonial institutions of your Government, and for which, therefore, our own is not accountable; but the early termination of which, on the contrary, it contemplated, and, at its formation, passed laws intended to effect; and which it never fostered until insidiously infolded in the coils of the serpent by a long-continued, secret, and most wicked conspiracy, now culminating in treason and rebellion), — laying aside, I say, this mighty and peculiar evil, not involved nor to be estimated in any general question such as you propose, I should maintain, and with the greatest confidence too, that our experiment seems to have satisfactorily proved, that many subordinate and independent republics (each sovereign within its own sphere of action, extending to the domestic relations, to municipal laws, and to all exclusively internal government,) combined as one nation under a written Constitution clearly defining their and the nation's respective powers, and vesting in the National Legislature and Administration all those necessary for the maintenance and enforcement of its external relations to other nations, and also those necessary for its internal harmony and support as one nation, — are exceedingly well adapted (if not the best form, so far as history teaches, that could be devised) for the internal peace, security,

and material prosperity, and equally for the moral and intellectual progress, of the mass of the people, and for maintaining a position of strength, dignity, and influence among the other nations of the earth, sufficient for all external security and the advancement of external commercial prosperity.

What government heretofore known has secured, for the space of eighty years, so much of internal peace and prosperity to its subjects, or been so free from the agitations and distresses of foreign wars? And what people ever, in the same period of time, made greater progress in numbers, in wealth and civilization, and in general happiness and prosperity, saving only the unhappy portion of it cursed with slavery as part of its inheritance?

But I go much farther, and maintain that the manner in which this Government has grappled with the fearful monster, called by the mild name of Secession, so suddenly and unexpectedly appearing in the midst of a peaceful and peace-loving community, and the manner in which the central power of the nation is crushing out this gigantic and long-prepared treason, — the calmness and self-control of the people under circumstances so appalling, never losing for a moment their firmness or self-possession in the most disastrous moments, but submitting with entire loyalty to the measures of the Government and of those in authority, in however ill accordance with their previously declared feelings and opinions, — and the unstinted confidence with which they pour out life and

wealth for its protection, — are not only proof of its capacity and sufficiency for the protection of its citizens from all ordinary dangers of domestic or foreign foes, but prove it to be in truth the strongest government hitherto known for every purpose that touches the heart of a people.

It may savor to you of national vanity, or of much self-deception, when I say, that we have no belief that any other Government, standing merely on its *power to command* the resources and services of its subjects, could have encountered an internal foe of such gigantic proportions (encouraged and indirectly aided by the strongest of foreign nations) with the power and success which have thus far signalized the inherent strength and capacity of our own, — resting, in the Free States, entirely upon the affections and will of the whole people, who feel *themselves to be the Government*, acting through accredited agents; and who, acknowledging no superior governing class or classes, but knowing that their safety is entirely in their own hands and dependent on their own individual responsibility and energy, march coolly and resolutely, as one man, to its rescue from the overthrow with which it is threatened.

What other government now existing could, in the same short space of time, (starting with no military preparation worth speaking of,) after fifty years of profound peace, have brought so many thoroughly armed and well-disciplined soldiers, or indeed so many soldiers of any kind, into the field; — have built and

equipped such a newly invented navy as in a few weeks will line our coasts and rivers, or could have incurred such enormous expenditures, without serious diminution, if not utter ruin, of its credit ! Yet, with us, the credit of the Government, however shaken in European estimation, has actually grown at home almost in proportion to the immense demands made upon it.

We have entire faith, that when this Rebellion, so unhappily prolonged by the sympathy and indirect aid of other nations from whom better things were hoped, shall have been effectually suppressed (as we believe it soon will be, if England and France do not forcibly intervene in its support, and as it finally will be, whether they intervene or not), the strength, vitality, and permanence of Republican Government will have vanished from the list of debatable questions, however much other forms, for other reasons, may be preferred by those to whom republican equality is distasteful.

You will excuse this ebullition of Americanism in one who is called upon to defend the political institutions of his country (which, next to his religious faith, are the objects of his love and veneration) against arguments urged for their disruption and overthrow.

One of your chief complaints against us — pervading more or less the whole of your press and public oratory on the subject — is, that we, in fighting to maintain the Constitution and the Union, are not contending for freedom, but are in truth, whatever may

be our pretences, fighting for the continuance and support of slavery, which the Constitution and Union recognize in effect as a portion of the organic law, and the protection of which they are pledged, to a certain extent, to enforce. This is relied upon very firmly, and, I doubt not, sincerely, by many conscientious persons, as justifying not only the want of any sympathy with our cause, but much of the ill-will prevailing towards us; though it is hard to understand why it should, as it manifestly seems to do, cause your countrymen actually to take sides against us, as if we of the Free States were the supporters of slavery, and the slaveholding rebels the champions of freedom.

This complaint, however, I must be permitted to say, seems founded in very superficial and narrow views of the origin and nature of the conflict, and in entire misapprehension of its probable, and, as we believe, inevitable result.

It is never to be forgotten in this discussion, that we have not placed ourselves in our present position by any voluntary agency on our part.

In the providence of God, the people of the Free States were, by the force of circumstances, combined with the Slave States into one nation for mutual support and protection, with this inherited problem of human bondage pervading one portion of it, to be worked out as part of its mission or destiny, and to be solved, in its influences upon our national life and character, according to those laws of self-preservation and moral obligation which He has established for the

government of the world. We have no escape. We must encounter the question, as presented in all its momentous bearings and consequences, with courage and firmness, according to our sense of duty, or basely shrink from it as unequal to the conflict.

Now, our well-considered and firm conviction is, that the path of duty is plain before us, in reference both to our own welfare, and, especially, to that of the great numbers, as we believe, of loyal citizens in the Slave States, — in reference even to the best interests of the traitors themselves and their wretched slaves, and to those of the still more wretched poor whites deluded into this war, (which, if successful on their side, can only terminate in the perpetuation of their own abject ignorance and poverty, and in preventing the possibility of their redemption to the position of intelligent freemen,) all of whom are component parts of the nation whose welfare is intrusted to our keeping.

We see in this Rebellion the natural fruits of slavery acting upon the principles and tempers of the owners of slaves (the perfidy and ferocity of large numbers of whom, if not of the majority, have been so unexpectedly and fearfully developed in the inception and prosecution of the conspiracy), and acting, too, upon the habits and characters of the mass of the white populations subjected by its inevitable operation to their control: and we religiously believe that we see in it also the clearly appointed means for the final extirpation of the atro-

cious system, so long the curse and disgrace of American, and, by its origin, of Anglo-Saxon civilization.

The Rebellion places us, the Free States and the Slave States, in one of three inevitable positions. First, we of the North must concede to the men of the South their asserted right of secession by yielding to their forcible maintenance of it, and so enable them to establish a slave empire, or perhaps more than one, founded on human bondage as the cornerstone or basis of their social and political institutions; — or, secondly, we must extirpate the evil by universal emancipation by the edge of the sword, destroying at a blow the whole basis of the industrial pursuits of a very large portion of our country, incurring the fearful hazards of immeasurable present misery thus to be inflicted upon its whole population (including large numbers, as we believe, of loyal fellow-citizens, and the unhappy slaves themselves, wholly unprepared for freedom or self-guidance), and retaining their territories as parts of the national domain, to be re-organized under new social institutions, corresponding with those of the Free States, by such of the inhabitants as shall remain, and by colonization from without; — or, as the only remaining course, we must compel the return of the people of the Slave States to their allegiance to the Union and the Constitution, admitting all the rights which these secure to them, and relying upon our future ability to deal with the subject of slavery as the laws of humanity and of self-interest, and moral and re-

ligious obligations, (operating upon the people of those States under the influence of the Free States,) shall dictate. This we must do in full confidence that the predominance of slavery, as a political power in our national councils, has received its death-blow ; that its extension is rendered impossible ; that its vaunted prestige, as a type of high civilization, is for ever gone ; and that a daily increasing consciousness of its ruinous imbecility, in contrast with free labor, within confined limits, and of its incompatibility with the material strength, prosperity, happiness, or general cultivation of the people, will sooner or later lead to gradual emancipation under wise and humane laws, administered with a just regard to the rights and interests of all, and untrammelled by any want of ample means to be generously expended by the nation for the common honor, safety, and happiness of the whole people.

I have already stated some of the reasons why the obligations of self-preservation, of religion, of law, and of humanity, call upon us to resist, at every cost of life or treasure, and at all hazards, the establishment of any slave empire carved out of this republic. There are, at present, comparatively very few among us, who, from regard either to the whites or to the blacks, would recklessly attempt sudden and immediate abolition, if it can be avoided ; while the great mass of the people are resolutely determined, if possible, to sustain the Union, with the Constitution as it is, believing that the natural laws of God's government will eventually, and at no very distant day, solve the great problem in

the manner last suggested, with the least possible injury to all existing rights and interests.

But if this solution shall be found to be impracticable; if the South shall with pertinacious recklessness continue its desperate struggle, *or shall be aided in continuing it with better hope of success by foreign intervention*, so that the alternative must be either the destruction of the Union, or the immediate extermination of slavery, — then we have no doubt either of our interest or of our right under the laws of self-preservation, or of our duty to God and to man, to extirpate the curse at once by all means in our power. We shall not falter nor hesitate in this fearful task, but go straight on, leaving the consequences in the hands of Him who “causeth the wrath of man to praise him,” and upon the heads of those who have thus brought upon themselves an awful retribution for a degree of wickedness and folly beyond all former example. We shudder to contemplate the probable consequences of such a war to the present generation of men; but, looking into the great future, they weigh in our estimation but as dust in the balance, compared with the certain and endless miseries of national downfall. Will such nations as Great Britain and France, the boasted champions of modern civilization, take upon themselves the dire responsibility of creating or fostering such a revolutionary struggle as this? Would they, if they could, inscribe themselves on the pages of history as the virtual founders of the only empire the world ever saw which presumed to

build itself on the atrocious principle of perpetuating human slavery ! Or, taking part with the slaveholders in a struggle which has this for its end, under the specious guise of obeying the call of humanity to put an end to a sanguinary strife incidentally affecting for a time their own commercial interests, would they expect to come out of a mortal contest with the great body of the American people with less loss to themselves than the value of the interests which now suffer from a temporary cause ! I see nothing that could come of it but prolongation of war, fearfully increased bloodshed, and a vast ruin of material interests for all parties, incurred in the name of humanity and civilization, but for the real purpose of crushing the Free American people, and erecting on the wreck of their Union an empire of everlasting slavery.

I have thus, my friend, endeavored to present to you the American side of the great question in hand, in answer to the arguments you urge as influencing the English mind against us in our struggle with the Slave States : and although fully conscious of the feeble and imperfect manner in which I have handled so vast a theme, the proper exposition of which would require a volume rather than a letter, I trust that the views I have presented may tend to satisfy you, that our quarrel is not on a point of honor, nor for empire nor acreage, nor from a spirit of vindictiveness or revenge, but for national life, and the cause of good government, law, and humanity ; and that the surest and quickest mode of extirpating slavery, and insuring the down-

fall of what you justly call the Devil's kingdom in this country, (if such be the desire of your countrymen.) is not by sympathy and aid to the conspirators, inspiring them with constant hope of speedy intervention in their behalf, but by that prompt and decisive discouragement of their cause which shall for ever crush that hope, and lead them, in the consciousness of their helplessness without it, to return to their allegiance.

And allow me to add, that this course is, as we all here think, that which the material interests of your country and of France, as well as of our own, imperatively demand. If our war be soon terminated (as it must be if left to our own management), the supply of cotton will be in a great measure immediately resumed, and trade between our countries be extensively revived; though this will not, probably for many years, be of the magnitude hitherto existing, as the habits and necessities forced upon us by the war have had the inevitable effect of driving us to measures of self-protection, and independence of foreign supplies, in manufactures of clothing, and arms and munitions of war, and artificial luxuries, — and of weakening the bonds of friendly intercourse so conducive to profitable trade.

But if England or France, or both, shall directly intervene in the expectation of effecting any other solution of our difficulties than by the return of the rebels to their allegiance, I have not the slightest hesitation in assuring you, that, whatever may be the ultimate effect of such intervention, there can be no

rational hope of any immediate or early relief from the embarrassments and distresses caused by the want of cotton, and much less from those caused by the curtailment of our markets for foreign merchandise.

The people of the Free States will rise up to a man to resist any such interference in our domestic affairs, let it come in whatever form it may. Nor could it probably come in any that would not lead to increased alienation and bitterness on both sides, soon to terminate in war. I think I speak advisedly when I say this : for I have seen and talked with multitudes of all classes upon the subject, and am familiar with the popular feeling as expressed by the press throughout the country ; and I have never seen the individual who hesitated to avow determined resistance to any such intervention, at all hazards of national or individual suffering, or of life itself.

Such a continuance of the war would lead to still more resolute and deadly invasion of the Southern States, with no such limit in regard to their rights of property in slaves under the Constitution as now prevails and governs our armies, on the principle of treating them as rebellious children rather than as foreign foes ; but, on the contrary, the war would then, of necessity, be carried on as a foreign war, justifying, and demanding of us, the use of all the means of conquering our enemies which God and Nature have placed in our hands, including that of universal emancipation wheresoever our armies could reach, and arming the slaves against their masters and their allies. Nor

can it be doubted, that insurrections of the negroes (now repressed by their knowledge that the war is not now carried on with any view of encouraging them in this direction, but, on the contrary, with an avowed, and, as we are fast becoming convinced, a too tender regard for the legal rights of their masters as citizens of the Union.) would, upon such a new phase of the struggle, break out more or less extensively wherever our armies should appear, or seem to be approaching. And such are our inland as well as coastwise means of invasion and incursion, and such will be our naval armaments on the coast and in the rivers, that the cultivation of cotton to any great extent must be at least very precarious ; while our privateers (and we have to thank your Government that the right to use that weapon remains to us) will render its transportation to Europe much more so. So long, therefore, as the war should continue, your supplies of cotton would, at the best, be, as we believe, very small and uncertain ; while you would, in the mean time, have lost the whole market of the Free States for your manufactures, and have entailed upon your country and ours all the lamentable results, for years or ages to come, of an intense national hatred and aversion, arising from the feeling on our part of an atrocious wrong perpetrated by you, not in the cause of freedom or humanity, but for selfish ends against the cause of both, and for the perpetuation of human bondage.

How many years such a war might last, no one can foresee. Twenty millions of freemen, most of them

of English blood, with a large infusion of Irish (burning with the spirit of revenge), in a country affording abundant resources for food and clothing, and munitions of war on land and at sea, with the modern means of coast-defence in abundance within their limits, and spread throughout their territory, could not be very soon conquered, if determined to fight: and, in all probability, the war would not have terminated before the supply of American cotton would be too late to rescue from the grave the manufactures and commercial interests now dependent upon it, and for the protection of which it would have been undertaken; while the destruction of the markets of the Free States for your goods would not only have been universal, but probably would be perpetual. It adds not a little now to the exasperation felt towards England, that she has thrown her sympathy and moral aid on the side of those *who are the sole authors* of all this trouble and distress to her as well as to us, and *who have always been her worst enemies* on this side of the water; and there would be no limits to this exasperation, should she go farther in material aid to them.

May God in his mercy avert from you and us the calamities of such an interference!

Ever faithfully yours,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq.

VII.

BOSTON, August 1, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have, almost unaccountably to myself, thus long delayed further reply to your letter. Perhaps the explanation might be found partly in apprehension of having already exhausted your patience; but I must confess to still greater discouragement in the new evidence, almost daily brought, of the increasing aversion of your people from us; and of the absolute foregone conclusion, which they seem determined to adopt, (as a matter of will rather than of reason,) of the final breaking-up of our Union. This leads me to fear, that whatever may be said on our side of the question will be of little interest, if it fall not on closed ears. It sometimes seems, indeed, as if England, having in a great measure composed her ancient feuds with France, and desiring some other object of national hatred and contempt, was seeking to establish another France on this side of the Atlantic.

But having gone so far towards the completion of my answer, and feeling that some, at least, of the remaining topics are of no less interest to us than most of those already touched upon, I will venture this further tax upon your indulgence.

You must not suppose that I differ from you re-

specting the right of England to observe the strictest neutrality in all cases of rebellion arising in foreign nations ; or that I fail justly to appreciate the honor due to her for her general observance of it, and in so extensively and nobly rendering her shores an asylum of the oppressed. I have already explained that our grief is not that she has, but that she has *not*, preserved a strict neutrality in our Rebellion.

In the cases you suggest, of Southern ascendancy perverting our political institutions, by attempting to attach the Free States to the car of Slavery in violation of the principles of the Constitution, we should, if that were attempted by force of arms, undoubtedly rise, and resist it to the death. Our struggle, in that case, would be to reinstate the Constitution, truly construed, in all its lawful authority. Allow me, however, to add, in passing, that, were such avowedly the nature of the contest now going on in this country, we could not be more surprised or disappointed at finding England arraying herself on the side of oppression and slavery, than we have been, and are now, in finding her sympathies enlisted with rebels who are fighting for substantially the same cause under a different pretext.

I approach the consideration of the supposed causes of the ill-feeling of your countrymen, which seems so very general, and of their wish for the dissolution of our Union, which you admit to be universal (and which, from whatever motives, appears so too evidently to admit of serious denial), with a full consciousness

of the delicacy of the subject, and with some fear that I may be thought to trespass, however unintentionally, upon your friendly indulgence in the treatment of it. But I am sure that you will not question my sincerity in saying, that whatever I may think in regard to certain classes of them, or of their motives, I have not a momentary doubt of the disinterestedness, ingenuousness, and honesty of others, who, like yourself, are influenced only by considerations of humanity and public policy, and a just regard for our welfare.

You seem indignant that our people should assign, as incentives to the unfriendliness manifested by yours, and to their general desire for the dissolution of our Government, such causes as the blockade, the tariff, the want of cotton, a wish to see our national power broken down or crippled, and our competition in commerce and manufactures seriously impaired; and you seem to consider that you have proved the imputation of them to be unfounded, and therefore insulting, by the suggestion, that otherwise England might well have yielded to the temptation of such influences. But you surely do not mean to be understood as maintaining that either or all of these motives, however real or unquestioned, would have justified her in the sight of the world, or in the eyes of the honest portion of her own people, in taking part with the rebels in a war against our Government, or in affording them direct material aid. The circumstance, therefore, that your Government has not declared war, nor officially rendered such aid, is no proof that your countrymen, as

individuals, have not been influenced by these considerations. On the other hand, I submit to your candor, that the evidence, if it exist, of their general desire for our overthrow, and of extensive and almost unlimited aid given by them to the rebels, (by which alone they have been enabled thus far to carry on the war,) and of a seemingly almost universal sympathy with their cause, affords strong *primâ facie* proof that the motives in question have had more or less influence, unless such desire, aid, and sympathy can be accounted for by other equally satisfactory causes. And you must admit, that if the just and honorable motives which actuate you, and others like you, in your feelings and views, but which only the most highly cultivated classes can be supposed to appreciate, could be assigned as those influencing your people at large in their feelings towards us in this struggle, they never yet have been so assigned, (at least to any such extent as to attract our notice,) or as those by which your press and Parliament and public orators profess to be actuated.

How can we be justly complained of for believing these influences to prevail throughout your land, when they constitute so large a portion of the staple for the abuse showered upon us by your press, in public demonstrations, and in private correspondence?

Is not our Government, in your leading journals and reviews and in public speeches, denounced as an already overgrown mob, under the control of vulgar manners, passion, and brutality, — dangerous to the

peace and security of others? Is not the American Union proclaimed to be a nuisance and a menace to all other governments? Are we not abused in the most scurrilous terms for our tariff (necessarily raised by the exigencies of the war) as being *designedly hostile* to England, and a justifiable cause of anger, if not of war? And has not every conceivable appeal to argument, prejudice, interest, and passion, been urged in the press, in Parliament, and everywhere, to induce your Government to declare the blockade insufficient, and to disregard it, and to intervene for the help of the rebels? And are we, under such circumstances, to be censured for believing that such are the real sentiments of, at the least, a large portion of your people?

Now, my dear friend, at the hazard of your distrust of my candor and intelligence, though, I hope, of nothing more, I must frankly say, that we believe all these motives to have had more or less influence in bringing about the unhappy alienation, so painful now, and, as I fear, so portentous of evil in the future. And a moment's reflection must, I think, satisfy you, that, in so doing, I am not attributing to your countrymen "contemptible and villanous motives," as you term them; or, if they are to be so accounted, at least not more contemptible and villanous than such as haunt humanity everywhere, and must be included in all general estimates of individual or national character, or motives of action.

We all know that there is no motive or spring of human action more exciting and more enduring than

the spirit of competition or rivalry. It is sufficient to prompt the greatest efforts, and awaken many ungenerous sentiments, where it is merely personal, and where to excel another is the only object. It becomes more intense when important or supposed vital material interests are involved ; and still more so when reputation, pride, and self-respect are also mingled in the stake. Now, these influences are at work upon our two nations in a manner and to a degree before unknown in history, and tending to produce correspondingly exciting effects upon the minds of your countrymen, in contemplation of their relations to us.

For many long years, — so many, that the present “memory of man runneth not to the contrary,” — England has been at the head of the world in commerce, manufactures, wealth, and naval power ; claiming an almost undisputed mastery of the seas, and exerting a corresponding influence over all other nations ; while, at the same time, she has asserted a no less pre-eminent position in mental, moral, and religious culture. The inevitable result has been, an exalted sense of national superiority (may I not say, self-complacency ?) pervading the mass of her people ; a sentiment bred in the bone, for the existence of which they cannot be deemed morally accountable, however much so some of them may be for its ostentatious display, while others wear it so modestly and courteously as to give to it the seeming of a graceful virtue. This elevation and preponderance among the nations, her past and apparently unapproachable superiority in her military

and commercial marine, and in the extent and variety of her markets, secured by colonial dependencies encircling the globe, seemed to place beyond all hazard of loss or competition.

But within a very short period, and almost as by a sudden revelation, England has perceived that the United States are become her equal in population (I, of course, refer to the United Kingdom only, not to the Colonies); possess at least an equal amount of commercial tonnage, competing with hers all over the globe; and have built up a multiplicity of manufactures, which, chiefly begun since men of middle age came into being, are already creating at home an almost entire independence of foreign nations for the necessaries and some of the luxuries of life; and even now compete with some of her manufactures in foreign ports,—nay, with some even in her own. She perceives, too, that this young Republic possesses a territory unequalled by that of any other nation in extent, and in diversity of climate, (Russia being no exception, taking climate into account,) and occupied by a people not inferior to any other in enterprise, mechanical invention, general intelligence, and aptitude for the arts, whether of peace or war,—a population spreading over it in a ratio of increase never before witnessed or imagined, and which, unchecked, would soon become numerically greater than that of any other nation of Christian civilization on earth.

Now, my dear friend, I am but supposing Englishmen mortal, and swayed by the feelings common to

humanity everywhere, when I say, that it is natural, nay unavoidable, that, upon awakening to a sense of such competition in all that most nearly concerns their national prosperity, power, and pride, they should, at the first notice of these facts, apprehend a degree of danger to their own commercial and manufacturing interests, and a possible rivalry in national strength and influence : and, under these impressions, it is perfectly natural for them to believe that they see in the destruction of our National Government, by the breaking-up of our Union, not only immediate and entire relief from all such apprehensions, but also (what could not be less an object of interest or desire) an immediate and extensive increase of their own commercial prosperity, by taking from us for a time, if not for ever, or by sharing with us at least, the carrying-trade of the South ; — a great promotion of their manufacturing interests, in limiting the outlets for our productions, by either monopolizing, or enjoying on equal terms with us, its markets ; — and various great opportunities for profitable enterprise, which such a revolution on this continent (probably to be followed for years to come by other revolutions and internal disturbances of greater or less extent) would inevitably present to a neutral nation already at the head of the commerce, manufactures, and wealth of the world.

I speak of your countrymen's now *awakening* to this state of things as to a sudden revelation : because every thing in your current literature and gazettes, and in the conversation of your countrymen, has proved, that, until

of late, there was among the mass an almost entire want of knowledge of this country and its resources; owing, as I doubt not, to their general indifference, if not aversion, to every thing American, which I not only perceived, but which was more than once very frankly admitted, in my intercourse with them. The remembrance is quite fresh of the air of sometimes ill-concealed and amusing incredulity with which answers to inquiries as to the extent of our territories, and especially of our seacoasts, and concerning our tonnage, manufactures, population, &c., were received, only nine years ago, by persons (who could not be accounted below the average of your well-educated people) whom I met on the Continent and in England. I doubt not that I was, in several instances, considered a veritable American Munchausen in my statements so given, although they were carefully kept within the truth.

This war, so directly affecting the material interests of your countrymen, and being intrinsically of deep interest, has suddenly drawn attention to American affairs, and aroused a general desire for information respecting them. That which you get from some of your national agitators, acting with the aid and under the inspiration of Southern gold; still more that which comes directly from unscrupulous and lying secessionists, who have enrolled your press in their service, — is in danger of being perverted no less to your injury, as we think, than to our own.

The causes above enumerated, I believe to be (with-

out further reproach to your countrymen than in accounting them human) a sufficient *groundwork for the national belief*, now so universally entertained and expressed, that the separation of the Free from the Slave States is inevitable. This is with you all a fore-gone conclusion. *Is not "the wish," however unconsciously to some of you, "father to the thought"?*

I doubt not that there are many, I hope very many, among you, of broader views, whose voices may yet be heard to stem the torrent of public opinion, which seems rapidly hurrying both nations into a state of settled enmity. I should hope that there are many who otherwise would see, in the rising prosperity and power of a people of the same blood, literature, religion, and love of liberty, vast elements of mutual and combined power, of progressive civilization and freedom, coupled with a positive increase of all valuable interests, material as well as intellectual and spiritual; but who, through misapprehension of our institutions and our social and national condition, desire the separation of the Union from other and higher considerations than national selfishness or pride. But it is requiring of us too much, I think, when you ask us to believe that the mass of your merchants, manufacturers, and people at large, are above the reach of such influences as I have suggested, however willing or able they may be to keep their effects within the control of national law, and of a just regard for the rights of a foreign nation, with which they have no other cause of quarrel, and which has so recently extended to them the hand of cordial friendship.

But, my dear friend, I do not believe that these motives and influences, however strong, are by any means the sole or the chief cause of the alienation of your people from ours, and of the bitterness attending it. I believe that there is one lying deeper, ever rankling in the minds of your ruling classes and of those nearest to them, and in the minds of all classes of your people who sympathize with them,—a cause far more effective and far more permanently dangerous: I mean, hatred of our democratic institutions, as being in themselves intrinsically demoralizing, and of pernicious and dangerous influence in the use made of them in domestic assaults upon the Constitution of your own Government. These institutions, I fear, some, even of our friends among you, begin to hold in distrust, under the wretched, I had almost said voluntary, delusion avowed by many of your leading men and presses, that this Rebellion may be taken as a final test of the capacity of man for self-government;—a clear demonstration of the insufficiency of such a government for its own maintenance;—proof, in short, that the Great Republic was but a bubble that has burst. They fancy that they behold this, instead of seeing the Rebellion to be, what it most plainly is, neither more nor less than a repetition, in another form, of the old contest between despotism and slavery on one side, and freedom and humanity on the other,—a contest arising, indeed, under a republican form of government, *but so arising only because the despotism and slavery were an accursed portion of its inheri-*

ance, with which it has had to struggle from its birth, and which is now seeking the mastery, to bury freedom and humanity in ruins. As well might it be said that the human constitution is unfitted for the functions for which God created it, because some of the race are struggling to wrench from their vitals a cancer inherited as a portion of their mother's blood. My unfaltering trust in God is, that as in human suffering is found not only the test of the most vigorous and enduring vitality, but also the means of the highest spiritual elevation ; so will this Republic stand forth, when this hard struggle is over, a clear manifestation of the unconquerable vitality of a free government in the hands of intelligent freemen ; of an elevated loyalty and confidence in the hearts of the people, which nothing else could have inspired.

I am aware, my dear friend, that this is a delicate subject, even with men of your liberal and broad ways of thinking, whose concurrence, nevertheless, in this view, I may not anticipate ; but I know that you will bear with me kindly in the frank expression of thoughts and opinions, the concealment of which, in such a correspondence, would be disingenuous, and unworthy of us both.

No one thing surprised me so much, in my intercourse with your countrymen at home or abroad, as their general profound loyalty (for I can use no other phrase) to your aristocracy. I did, indeed, occasionally meet with some disposed to disparage the institution, and complain of its influences ; but these

were exceptions. At other times, I was astonished at what seemed to me a sort of infatuation in the degree of reverence with which the nobility were regarded. I was soon satisfied that not merely their claims to the prestige of a ruling class, as a matter of indisputable birthright, were cheerfully accorded; but that a large portion, if not a great majority, of your people felt themselves positively elevated by the existence of such a class among them in the capacity of rulers. I found that other American travellers felt the same conviction as my own. Do not mistake me. Observe, that I am not now questioning the reasonableness or utility or dignity of the aristocratic institution, or of the popular sentiment regarding it: I only affirm the existence of that sentiment, and that it is an element affecting our national relations.

You know that the modern boast of Englishmen is, that their country is governed by gentlemen, — a boast that can hardly be felt, or at least uttered, without more or less of implication that other countries are not, or may not be, so governed: and I suppose you will concede, that although the *ultimate political power* of England may really reside in the middling class, representing the great bulk of her capital and wealth, the ostensibly *ruling class* is (and of present inevitable necessity must be) *mainly, if not exclusively, of noble birth*; and that this does not arise

* more from the claims of the aristocracy, and their long-inherited prestige, than from the equally long-inherited belief, prejudice, sentiment, or whatever it may be

called, of the people at large, that it ought to be, or must be so, and that their own dignity and honor and safety require that it should be so. , Indeed, looking at the fact that so many generations have been born and educated to think and feel that they must be ruled by those having over them the authority of birthright, and considering also the national grandeur to which they have attained under rulers thus derived, it is perfectly natural that the people of England should believe and feel that their national safety and prosperity depend upon the continuance of this fountain of authority; and it is much to their credit that they should be satisfied and pleased to be governed by those whose birth and breeding may seem to secure that they will always be gentlemen: of which class, according to their notions of it, the noble, alike by inheritance of claim on one side and the acknowledgment of it on the other, is naturally the complete exemplar. Both the rulers, therefore, and the ruled, on your side of the water, are apt to view with jealousy and distrust, mingled more or less with aversion and contempt, a people whose Government is in the hands of the "vulgar majority" (to use the phrase which your people, and, of late, the *slaveocracy*, are so fond of using); where, although public offices, in the present imperfect though rapidly advancing state of general cultivation, are too often in the hands of politicians more ignoble from character than any birth could make them, and the Government occasionally seems to rock under their low and selfish influences, it

is still found to have inherent firmness and strength enough to secure, under all ordinary circumstances, the peace, prosperity, and advancing intelligence of the people at large, beyond any form of government ever before tried.

It is, we believe, this hitherto apparent proof of the sufficiency of a Republican Government, founded on universal suffrage, for all the ends of national peace, prosperity, and power, — and the imagination or belief that its seeming success may be used or perverted in your own country to disprove the necessity or expediency of ruling classes who inherit political authority as a birthright (and so may operate as a danger or menace to one of the most cherished institutions of your affections and pride, as the leading nation of the earth), — which have entered most deeply into the hearts, not only of those classes, but of all classes of your countrymen sympathizing with them; and, combining with the motives and interests before suggested, cause them to hail with undisguised delight, and to accept as a foregone conclusion, the prostration of our national power, and “the bursting of the Republican bubble,” by the separation of our Union.

It certainly cannot be denied, and I have no disposition to conceal, that, in so far as national diplomacy is concerned, the Government of England, for some years previous to this Rebellion, has, with some notable exceptions, stood in favorable contrast with that of the United States in regard to gentlemanly deportment.

We have had, it is true, too much reason, at times, to be mortified by exhibitions of rudeness, arrogance, and want of breeding, in some of our public men,—a fault supposed by you to flow from the rule of the “vulgar majority.” But it is to be remembered, that, during the periods of such discreditable exhibitions, *Southern influence was in the ascendant, and exercised all the appointing power.* This was the sole inspiration and exponent of the hatred towards England, and contempt of all foreign powers, which were manifested in the language of the Senate and the press, and in unscrupulous acts of filibustering, culminating in the villanous Ostend Manifesto, in which the miserable, corrupt, and imbecile Buchanan, our minister at your Court, bore so conspicuous a part; and for which, a celebrated Southern senator, now a leader in the Rebellion, said in my presence, at a dinner-table several years since, that “he was willing to stump the South, *uniting with it a war with England, for which the South was always ready.*”

How little did I dream then that I should see, in a few short years, the proud and truly noble aristocracy of England stretching out its hand to grasp that of the ignoble bastard aristocracy of the South (having no other foundation than property in human flesh), as in protection of a common interest, and ready to rush into a war for the destruction of those who, on this side of the water, had long been England's only and fast friends;—and, worst of all, to hear her people cry Amen!

But, my dear friend, while I freely admit that the form and nature of your Government tends more certainly to secure, in her foreign representation and in her diplomacy, the inestimable quality of gentlemanly bearing and courtesy, it must be borne in mind, that it as inevitably tends to produce a sense of supposed superiority over others, apt to become more or less apparent and irritating, and a sensitiveness to imaginary insult, or want of due respect, not less dangerous to a good understanding with foreign nations; and I believe this to have had no inconsiderable influence in the diplomatic intercourse of our countries.

And this brings me to your accusations against us for a general want of gentlemanly deportment towards England, and especially in the case of the "Trent," "that miserable affair," as you justly term it; which, though presenting opportunity for the establishment of principles of international law of the highest moment, settled nothing but your seeming willingness to go to war with us upon the first opportunity for a pretext to do so; and so planted a thorn to fester in our hearts, which you have as yet shown no disposition to withdraw.

You ask, "If Mr. Seward felt as he said he did, why not instantly disclaim Welles and the other approvers of the act? Why, by silence at least, encourage all the lawyers in your country to compose arguments the other way? Why lock up the two knaves who, he admits now, were still under our flag, and keep them till demand made? It was more *like a low*

attorney, than a gentleman, to whisper to his clients the President and United States, ‘ We are in the wrong ; it is trespass : but let us wait, and see if England issues a writ.’ ” And you say, that some of your people add to our speech, “ We have bullied her often before without resistance : let us try it on again till she complains.”

Now, every one must know, who knows any thing of public opinion and sentiment in this country, as appearing in the press, in public discussions, and private conversation, that on the reception of the intelligence of the “ Trent ” affair, and for some weeks afterwards, there was much real doubt concerning the law applicable to the case ; and also whether, under its peculiar circumstances, and the notorious antecedents of England in taking men by thousands from American vessels at sea to man her ships-of-war, (*the right to do which she has ever since cautiously refused to expressly abandon,*) she would claim the redelivery of these conspicuous traitors, indisputably known to be, and ostentatiously coming as such, when received on board of the “ Trent,” and so attempting to avail themselves of her flag to aid in the destruction of their Government, until then in most friendly relations with her own.

You compliment our lawyers as skilled in international law. I wish I could consider them justly entitled to be so considered. But, however that may be, very few of them were found, after nearly half a century of profound peace, to have any ready know-

ledge of that special branch of it which relates to prize. Now, *all the first opinions, both of lawyers and statesmen*, were that Capt. Wilkes was legally right in his proceedings, and the public mind was universally so impressed. In a little while, as the examination proceeded and discussions took place, doubts began to be expressed on one point after another, and especially upon the lawfulness of taking the traitors out of the vessel before sending her in for adjudication; and one at least of our most eminent jurists elaborately maintained, and still maintains, that it was right to do so, and that no authority or recognized principle can be adduced to the contrary, inasmuch as no adjudication for or against the vessel could affect the question of the personal rights or *status* of the prisoners, which must be determined by other proceedings, in which her owners could have no interest, and no relation to them.

But the opinion soon began to prevail, that although the visitation and search were clearly lawful, and the vessel would have been adjudged subject to condemnation, or at least to lawful detention, if she had been brought in for trial, nevertheless, Capt. Wilkes had no lawful authority to constitute himself the judge of the facts and the law, and act upon his own decision of them; that he therefore erred in taking the prisoners out and suffering the vessel to proceed, instead of sending her into port; and that, on this ground, England might lawfully demand their redelivery. But

L. of C.

there was a no less general and entire conviction, that England, although having the technical right to object to the procedure on this ground, could not, in view of the facts and of her past conduct and relations to this country, reasonably complain of the omission of a mere form, where the facts were undeniable, and the seizure, if not altogether, yet, so far as the prisoners were concerned, was so clearly justifiable ; and especially when that form was waived to our own prejudice, and for the sole purpose of accommodation to the owners of the vessel and her passengers, and of evincing the utmost delicacy to her flag.

Now, it was while this doubt and uncertainty were pervading the public mind, and our lawyers and statesmen were searching for precedents and discussing principles, and before the remotest possibility of hearing any thing of your views upon the subject, that Mr. Seward, for the purpose of preventing all misconception on your part, and all apprehension of any disposition on the part of our Government to trench upon the legal rights, or upon the most scrupulous regard for the honor of your flag, sent an especial despatch to Mr. Adams, with orders to read it to Earl Russell. In this he stated that the proceedings of Capt. Wilkes were not in pursuance of any instructions from his Government ; that he (Mr. Seward) was desirous that they should not be so considered ; and that we were disposed and prepared to adjust the matter, if any difference of opinion existed, as such a question should be adjusted between two friendly nations.

The President and Mr. Seward did not therefore wait, while thinking us clearly in the wrong, to first see what the other party would do. They waited under the opinions of the lawyers and statesmen of the country that you had committed the first offence, and that we were clearly in the right, *except in a mere matter of form, waived for your benefit, concerning the mode of proving facts which no one could deny*;—with no belief or apprehension that England, upon a knowledge of them, could regard the procedure as any insult or slight to her flag;—and after having taken the usual and proper steps to prevent the possibility of her so considering it, and for ascertaining, by mutual discussion, what duty and national honor required of both nations under such circumstances.

Mr. Seward does not admit, as you seem to suppose, that we were unqualifiedly, or the only party, in the wrong. He maintains that the first offence against the law of nations was committed by the “Trent,” in attempting to transport these rebels, who, worse than soldiers in arms, were seeking the protection of your flag on an errand for the destruction of their own Government. All he admits is, that the taking of them out of your vessel at sea was a violation of that law, and that, *this step being in its nature irremediable*, because the validity of her proceedings could not be legally investigated or determined, by reason of the omission to send her in for adjudication, you had the right to require the redelivery of the captives; *and we were precluded from standing upon any alleged*

prior wrong committed in her taking them on board, since we had abandoned the only means of ascertaining or proving that any such wrong had been committed.

I must therefore, my dear friend, consider the imputation that our President or minister behaved with disingenuousness or the cunning of a low attorney, as implied in your questions, or that there was a want of gentlemanly frankness, or of promptitude to redress an admitted wrong, as wholly unjustified by the facts ; with which, therefore, I cannot but think you were not familiar while penning them.

But how stands the account of England with us on the score of gentlemanly bearing and conduct ?

At the same time, and I believe on the same day, when the above-named despatch of Mr. Seward was written, *your Ministry, in entire ignorance whether there was any ground to suppose that the slightest wrong or indignity had been authorized by ours, or even intentionally committed by Capt. Wilkes, and without waiting a moment for possible opportunity for disavowal or explanation, were inditing a despatch to Lord Lyons, demanding, in absolute terms, THE SURRENDER of the traitors as AN ULTIMATUM, and AN APOLOGY for their seizure* (terms required of inferiors or subordinates in position, and never among equals, at least until after opportunity for a mutual understanding and the failure of efforts to secure one), — *a procedure between two civilized nations, it is believed, wholly without parallel in history ;* and they accompanied this

demand by enormous military and naval preparations for its prompt enforcement, and this, too, against a nation known to be struggling for life with a gigantic internal rebellion. My dear friend, do you wonder that an American's blood tingles to the tips of his fingers as he writes this simple statement of facts?

I submit it to your own enlightened sense of right and wrong, and your own honest heart, to decide whether the Ministry of England, in this transaction, preserved her prestige of *gentlemanly deportment*.

It is fortunate for us, and I think for you too, and perhaps for the world, all of whom might otherwise have been involved in wars for many sad years to come, that our inability to stand upon the ground that the first wrong was committed by you, because of our having thrown away the only means of establishing it, allowed of the surrender without confessed national humiliation and disgrace; but we have been brought too near to the border of them not to feel most keenly the will on your part to inflict them. Henceforth let Englishmen remember, that, however England may have heretofore imagined that America had treated her rudely or insultingly, the debt has been more than cancelled.

You say that Europe has decided in your favor in this affair. I think you are exceedingly mistaken in supposing so. She has indeed so decided on the question of our right to take the knaves out of your keeping, and no doubt with great satisfaction, as the decision definitively binds you to a principle of interna-

tional law which your country had for many long years set at nought in practice (at least so far as impressment was concerned), if not denied in theory ; and perhaps also she thinks that this act may be hereafter esteemed a precedent for rights of neutrals, which have been always claimed by the Continental nations, but which England has never conceded. But I believe the disapprobation of the manner in which the claim for redress was made, the ultimatum and the apology, and the armed hand extended to enforce them, have excited as much disapprobation abroad as they have in this country, although, of course, not accompanied by the same sense of wrong.

But, my dear friend, there is one other most disagreeable feature of this "miserable affair" to be taken into account in determining the question of relatively gentlemanly deportment between England and America. The despatch from Mr. Seward to Mr. Adams, to which I have alluded, was read, as you and we now know, by Mr. Adams to Earl Russell and Lord Palmerston, immediately after its receipt. At the time of its reception, the despatch to Lord Lyons, stating the ultimatum and demand for an apology, had gone forward, and all England was lashing itself into a rage on the ground that a gross and intentional insult to her national flag had been offered ; and the Ministry was pushing forwards naval and military armaments in hot haste, in evident furtherance and support of this excitement. It soon began to be rumored, that such a despatch, disavowing any authority on the

part of our Government to Capt. Wilkes for his proceedings, disclaiming any intentional insult to the English flag, and proposing a conciliatory arrangement of the matter, had been received by our minister. But the "Post" (Lord Palmerston's paper, and the supposed official authority, so far as newspapers are concerned) *immediately hastened to publish* conspicuously what was justly considered an official, explicit contradiction of the news; admitting, indeed, that a despatch had been received and read, *but denying that it related at all to the "Trent" affair.* And Lord Palmerston and Earl Russell *permitted this denial and falsehood to pass uncontradicted for three weeks; during which time the English public was continually goaded into increasing fury against this country, not only by the instigations of the press, but by the fact that the ministry were in the mean time pressing forward warlike preparations without pause or abatement.* We have never, as yet, heard any explanation of this matter, nor have we learned that any inquiry, even in Parliament, was made concerning it, though long since notorious and uncontradicted; and, if this cannot be explained, may we not ask, where were the gentlemen in this case?

But enough of this. I gladly quit a subject so painful to every feeling involved in the love of my own country, and in affection and respect for yours; and wish to Heaven that I could for ever blot it from my memory.

With regard to the attempts made to excite the anger of your people towards us on account of our tariff, nothing can be more unreasonable. The Morrill Tariff was one clearly made necessary by the increased and enormously increasing expenditures of our Government; was in conformity to the ordinary means resorted to by all Governments for that purpose in case of need; and was quite as favorable, I am informed, to England, as that established by a recent treaty between her and France. And the Tariff bill last enacted, so bitterly and scurrilously denounced, was not only needed as a means of revenue, but *was made necessary by the internal taxes imposed on our manufactures*, in order that the relative value of imported goods should remain the same, and that no advantage should be given to them over our own; and I believe you will find that nothing more has been done.

You seem to rely very confidently on a test of your rectitude, in all the relations between our respective nations, which, I confess, seems to me somewhat novel; but which, if a true one, must, in this case, produce the strange result of proving both right and both wrong. You say, "Another test for you. You can rarely find a guilty man without some crushing consciousness of his guilt. Most unquestionably, we, one and all of us, here, believe we have been thoroughly without double-dealing or impropriety towards you. We believe the truth of the negative plea of Not guilty; but we affirm ourselves entitled to the credit of un-

flinching loyalty under circumstances involving us in appalling trials, &c., &c."

Such is the application of the test on your side. How does it work on ours? I assure you, that I do not know, and have not seen the American man, woman, or child, competent to think or feel upon the subject, nor heard of one, that does not fully believe and feel to the very bottom of the heart, that the people of England have behaved towards us, throughout this Rebellion, in the most unkind and unfriendly, not to say most unjust, manner possible, short of open war; and not only that their sympathies have been, and are, with the rebels, but that they have rendered, and still render, to them all the material aid in their power; and that they generally view us with an unconcealed hatred and pretended contempt, wholly unlooked for, and for which no reasonable cause has been, if any can be, assigned.

I am thankful, my dear friend, that this my labor in defence of my country, and in attempted correction of the misconceptions and misapprehensions so extensively pervading your own, is at length brought to a close. The work has caused me greater pain than labor; for I can truly say, that no public event during my life, and no private grief excepting those of domestic and kindred bereavement, has ever caused to me the heartfelt sorrow with which I contemplate the conduct of England to my own country in this hour of her trial.

I hope that I have done your countrymen and Gov-

ernment no injustice in any views I have presented ; and shall be much relieved if it can be shown that our complaints are unfounded. In any event, however, it is well that you, who entertain so clear and decided views on your side, should, at least, understand those taken on ours ; and, if our friendly discussion should only enable us mutually the better “to see ourselves as others see us,” it will not have been wholly in vain.

With sincerest wishes that the clouds now hanging over the future relations of our countries may soon be dispersed, and that we may be restored to the mutual amity, respect, and good-will which seemed to characterize them a short time ago, I remain

Ever faithfully, and in all circumstances,

Your friend,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq.

P. S. — It was not until after the draught of this letter had been placed in the hands of the copyist that I saw Count Gasparin's “America before Europe,” which I sent to you a few days ago. The similarity of some of the views presented in this correspondence to his leads me to make this statement ; as I might perhaps otherwise be thought guilty of plagiarism. Had I seen the book earlier, I should perhaps have saved myself and you some labor by referring to it, instead of writing myself on several topics.

The delay in forwarding this letter arose from my finding it, when copied, too long and minute for the patience of any one ; and I re-draughted considerable portions for the sake of condensation, and omitted between one and two sheets. You will, therefore, feel *grateful for the delay*.

VIII.

36, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON,
23d September, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have delayed acknowledgment and observation on your letters till I had received the entire of the series. Your last reached me only a few days ago. While it would be unbecoming in me to offer nothing in reply to arguments so elaborate and so carefully prepared, I cannot imagine that you expect or desire me, or that it could be useful for me to do so at any length. I feel it indeed very difficult and painful to me to write at all upon the subject, because, all-absorbing in interest as are its events, your war, after all your explanation, still seems to me a war on the part of the North, at present, so worse than aimless, and to be causing, by its excitement, such passion and fanaticism towards all the world, that I am quite sick at heart to think of it. I and my wife have, you know, many and most dear friends in your State and in New York. Scarce a letter comes from any of them but seems to my family circle (dispassioned, certainly, in their judgment on such a point) the letter almost of a madman. One such is just now before me, from a man you know well,—one most deservedly of, I may say, European reputation. Before he became infatuated, as I deem it, with the passion war breeds, he was as moderate,

tolerant, and wise a man as I know. Here is an extract from his letter :

“ I remember I am an enthusiast and fanatic by nature ; and I remember that I am writing to an Englishman, — business England : yet I must tell you that I cannot but regard this [the war] as the most sublime and beneficent step the world has made since the death of Christ, — a step that will do more for the true philosophy of Government, and that of Justice and of Liberty, than all that have gone before. . . . But what is to be the end ? God knows : I don't ; and I don't care. . . . For my part, I shall be glad to see Davis take Washington, and England and France recognize the Confederacy, if this is necessary to put a million of men in camps of instruction this fall. I am more and more absorbed in the war, and careless of any thing beyond it. So I trust it is to be with all of us. Another year, and we shall have done with this miserable skirmishing, and really gird ourselves for war. Either that, or, through a darker night than that of the French Revolution, we shall commit national suicide.”

I should be bitterly ashamed if it did not make me miserable to read such letters coming from those I love ; so miserable, that it sickens me to write about them.

In answering you, therefore, I shall not enter again into those matters which are transitory, and which I trust will soon be forgotten : I mean the supposed insults thrown by the English people on you of the North. I am sure this nation, *as a nation*, has meant

no insult ; and, as between nations as well as between men, a distinct national avowal to that effect ought to suffice. What you say as to Lord Russell's suppression of Mr. Adams's despatch, I cannot understand ; but it is clearly a matter I am incompetent to discuss. All I can say is, that Lord Russell has always been a most honorable man, but that his conduct in that matter does not look like it, if you are accurate.

In what I do say, I shall speak clearly and undisguisedly, knowing that nothing less would be honorable or useful, and that you wish me to do so ; and I shall say exactly what and all that I think. I would first repeat, that I am not the person, by study or occupation, to deal with such questions from this side the Atlantic ; though, out of our friendship, and as the person here whom you have addressed, I cannot refrain from writing upon them when you call on me.

I told you before, the doctrines of political economy as expounded here, and not by your Prof. Carey, have become the guiding faith of our people ; and we believe, the more rich and great nations there are in the world, the more good customers and clients for us. We believe (to use a good paradox of a dear old English friend), what you Americans do not thoroughly believe (I wish you did) ; viz., that *bigness is not greatness*.

But the great cause of the most remarkable change of feeling which has come across the English within the last eight months has been the utter repugnance caused here, in every man, woman, and child able to

reason, by the leading argument and view expounded by you and by all your statesmen; viz., that there is a special binding force in your written Constitution, whereby it is to be *binding to all eternity* on the inhabitants of every State whose ancestors agreed to it, in times however remote, unless the majority of the other States consent to let them out of such agreement.

You say truly, that the English cannot understand your Constitution, and that this view is perhaps of too technical and artificial a nature for any but an American to understand. It is more than that: it is to us of a most repulsive nature. The Liberals of Europe believe in the right and duty of rebellion (under fit provocation and reason, mind: there I should go any length you could desire), be the Constitution of the State written or unwritten. Further, I cannot comprehend how the fact of there being *litera scripta* can make the smallest difference. Writing only makes the evidence of an agreement clearer. Your States were first colonized under charters. Each of these charters was a contract between the Government and every one who settled under it; and, contract notwithstanding, still it was the colonists' duty, to the interests of themselves, their posterity, and all mankind, to throw off the charter (or, if no charter, then their allegiance) as soon as they were unjustly governed, and were strong enough to throw it off successfully. And it was the duty of the lovers of liberty here to feel, and they did feel and say (and,

thank God, in those comparatively dark times of our history they were not sent to any Fort Lafayette for saying), that England was doing a gross and grievous wrong in trying to retain them as subjects. You speak of consciousness of guilt in an accused people as a novel proof to be looked for in cases of international difference. There is an instance of its existence; but this is by the bye. Fort Lafayette has got you no sympathy in England, nor has the newspaper censorship: this is also by the bye.

You seem to admit that this right of rebellion may perhaps be all well enough for some component part of a single nation, but that it does not exist as between one State and another, independent in all points but certain ones on which they have agreed to form a partnership. I should have thought that the right to break a greater tie surely implied the right to break the less. Every human partnership has in its very nature, be the duration for long periods of years or for ever, for one of its incidents, the necessity of dissolution when it can be no longer carried on successfully: and every judicature, I believe, decrees dissolution in such a case. No nation or legislature can, I conceive, so legislate for posterity, that posterity cannot, if it has physical force, refuse to carry out any enactment it conceives destructive of its welfare: and, of that conception, posterity is the sole judge.

Let me put a case: I admit, a very small one. Whether I am right or wrong in my facts, it will illustrate what I mean. I believe, by your Constitu-

tion, you can only collect direct taxes in proportion to the population of each State. If I am right in this supposition, then, on the views taken by your Government and in your letter (almost deifying, as I conceive, the piece of parchment called your Constitution), any State of about your population, say Indiana, must pay the same taxes as Massachusetts; though you in Massachusetts probably are now twenty times as wealthy as Indiana, and, in fifty years, may be two hundred times as wealthy. I will assume further (I know it is a false assumption), that Massachusetts should crow over Indiana about this poll-tax privilege, till the latter State was wroth to death at the insults. Now, is Indiana to put up with this state of things till (*modo et forma* prescribed by the parchment) it can get it altered (if, which I suppose is the case, the parchment happens to say how the knot is to be untied)? The persistent use by your statesmen of this "artificial and technical" view, has, I believe, been most unhappy. Yet am I wrong in understanding your letter to say, that this view is an article of faith for which America would fight a world in arms?

As to your national life, and the necessity of all America, from Atlantic to Pacific, being under one Government, this also appears to us here a most baseless idea. Silly as you may deem the belief, I fully and honestly believe that Massachusetts, if it were a nation by itself, would, in many ways, have much more of the respect of European communities, and more influence in the world, than would be command-

ed by an Union boundless in its acreage, but such as is depicted in Mr. Lincoln's letter to H. Greeley, in which it is made a matter of perfect indifference whether there be or be not slavery as an established part of the system. For my part, I can't see why the President might not just as well have said "piracy" as "slavery," in his celebrated letter, if the South entertain (as I dare say they do), and would avow (as they certainly would be too cunning just now to do), that piracy as well as slavery is a part of the Christian dispensation, as now rightly comprehended. According to Confederate Vice-President Stephens, "Slavery is the corner-stone which the builders have rejected." Surely, if this be so, the next stone above it must be piracy.

If your Constitution is treated as the Lares and Penates of the New World, the Monroe doctrine seems further to be a demigod with you. To us in England, the idea of any European power agreeing to become the sovereign of the Southern States, should they ever contrive to get separate, (the Grand-master Free-mason to lay this or these building-stones of the Devil in the new edifice.) seems perfectly extravagant.

To a considerable extent, your dissensions have led us English to a constant comparing of constitutions and systems. Our people are as proud (if it be possible) of their Constitution as you of yours. The great bulk of us devoutly believe our scheme to be a panacea for all mankind. They would, if they could, establish King, Lords, and Commons, and the theo-

retical but unusable Veto of the Crown, among even the Red Indians. Our newspapers are paid to be the high-priests of this form of devotion. It would be childish for you Americans to take offence at any thing attributable to this cause. On the contrary. "Smile," I say, "and believe in the wisdom of differences."

The contumely with which the black race is treated in the Northern States, evidenced in Mr. Lincoln's scheme for expatriating your colored citizens, has had no little influence here. Surely the blacks are entitled to a different handling from those who especially proclaim them free. Is it not the fact, that your ambassadors have orders not to grant passports to free colored people?

These, I believe, are the influencing grounds on which English sympathy has been so much lost to your cause.

Belief, my dear friend, is not a matter of the will; and surely you will not consider it a mortal insult to your nation, if an ignorant, but, like me, most true friend of the North, and a mortal hater of the new revelation, still is unable to come to any other conclusion, than that, if you Northern people would let Virginia alone, and direct your powers to keep Kentucky and Tennessee, and get Arkansas and Texas and Louisiana,—of all, in short, that can be brought to tolerate your rule,—and then let the Gulf States go their own way, it would be better for the North, and for the human race too.

I have not yet received the books you are sending

me. Of Count Gasparin's book, I have seen a good review (or the commencement rather) in the "Débats."

It is really desirable that full evidence should be collected and spread abroad, to show what is not understood here, but what I myself consider as plain as a pikestaff (that is to say, as plain as Senator Brooks's cane); viz., that the new "corner-stone" theory (the Southern New Jerusalem) is the bottom of the whole affair. I suppose Gasparin's book does this. But there is one proof which I came across about two years ago, in reading some of your State histories, for an object connected with the science of political representation, more convincing to me than any other I have yet seen. The Legislature of, I think, Louisiana, but *a Legislature*, and one of the chambers of a Slave-State Legislature, passed a vote of some large sum of money (fifty thousand dollars, or some such sum), as a reward to any one who would kidnap Garrison, out of your State, I think it was, and carry him into theirs. This is the class of facts to get together; though such facts hardly establish, by the way, the homogeneity of people, or harmony of State partnership, on which you so greatly rely in your letter.

Hating all war if avoidable, and especially hating, instead of rejoicing in, your awful war, I pray you may have an early and happy issue out of it. Under all events, however, I am and shall remain

Your very sincere friend,

EDWIN W. FIELD.

Hon. CHARLES G. LORING, Boston, U.S.A.

IX.

BOSTON, October 10, 1862.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 23d of September, received yesterday, was a truly welcome relief. From your long silence, I had at times felt anxious lest my depth of feeling on the subject of my country's cause had betrayed me into some seeming trespass upon your just regard for your own ; at other times, I feared that I had wearied you by unwelcome zeal and pertinacity, from which you were seeking shelter in silence.

I realize most acutely the pain caused to you by this most unhappy alienation of our two countries, and complaints of your friends on this side of the water ; and I can well understand the sickness at heart which they create. While deploring, from the very depths of my own, your want of sympathy with us (arising, as I am constrained to believe, from misapprehension of the true nature of our cause, and its relations to the great principles of government, freedom, and humanity, as I understand them), I feel that your claims upon my confidence, respect, and friendship, are greatly increased by the candor and kind manner with which you have listened and replied to me in a discussion touching subjects so delicate as those of international faith and honor, in

which discussion I occupy the unfavorable, not to say unavoidably offensive, position of the complainant. I will still hope, that when the war shall be over, and its origin, motives, and results shall be better known, we shall shake hands over its fruits, in cordial and united belief that it was in truth a blessing, however dark may be its present disguise ; and that you will love and respect us not at all the less for our zeal in such a cause.

I should stop here, my dear friend, and, thanking you heartily for your past kind indulgence, should not obtrude upon you another word on the unwelcome theme, but leave your arguments without attempted reply, if it were not evident to me that some of them are founded on a misunderstanding of the views which I intended to present, but which, it appears, I failed to do in language as clear to others as to myself. Pardon me, therefore, in a brief explanation.

I would premise, however, that I should regret to have you think that I, or any of your or my friends here, sympathize in the extravagance of your correspondent from whose letter you quote, but of whose name I have no suspicion. It is to me unintelligible, otherwise than as a *war frenzy*, in which we have no fellowship. We do, indeed, from our inmost hearts, believe, that a more just or holy war, or one for higher and nobler ends, was never waged by man since the world was, than that which we are now carrying on for the maintenance of our nationality, and of our form of government, against conspirators, who

can make no just pretence of past or prospective oppression or wrong, but who have rebelled to crush that government for the avowed purpose of erecting a despotic aristocracy, founded on human slavery, in its place, or on a portion of its ruins. It is the old, never-ending struggle between despotism and freedom, in a new form; and the fate of free institutions on this entire continent for centuries to come hangs upon it. If this belief, and the willingness to sacrifice treasure and life without stint in its vindication, constitute us madmen, then must we be so accounted; and we are without reply to the indictment.

That "bigness is not greatness," and that little Massachusetts as a nation would be vastly more respectable than as a portion of a slave empire, or of one, however extensive and mighty, in which slaveholders should hold predominant political power, may be taken as axioms conceded by every one of her loyal sons.

Now, the misapprehension to which I refer is this. You understand me as contending that "there is a special binding force in our *written* Constitution, whereby it is to be binding to all eternity *on the inhabitants of every State*, unless the *majority of the other States* consent to let them out of such agreement." You say, that this view is not merely of a literal and technical, but "of a most repulsive nature"; that "the Liberals of Europe believe in the right and duty of rebellion, under fit provocation and reason, *be the Constitution of the State written or unwritten*;" that you

“cannot comprehend how the fact of there being *litera scripta* can make the smallest difference.” Again: you say that we “seem to admit that this right of rebellion may perhaps be all well enough for some component part of a *single nation*, but that *it does not exist as between one State and another, independent in all points but certain ones in which they have agreed to form a partnership* ;” but that “you should have thought that the right to break a greater tie surely implied the right to break the less ;” and that “every human *partnership* has in its very nature, be the duration for long periods of years or for ever, for one of its incidents, the necessity of dissolution when it can be no longer carried on successfully ;” and, finally, “that no nation can so legislate for posterity, that posterity cannot, if it has physical force, refuse to carry out any enactment it conceives destructive of its welfare ; and, of that conception, posterity is the sole judge.” And you illustrate *your conception* of *my theory* by the well-put supposed case between the States of Massachusetts and Indiana, founded on the idea of a *partnership* existing between them.

From these passages, it is obvious that you understand my exposition of the nature of our National Government to be, that it is founded on a *written compact between the different States*, or a *partnership between distinct co-ordinate political corporations*, under articles which we call the Constitution ; and that my main point is, that this peculiarity of our political

organization, in being thus founded on a *written* compact, renders "rebellion, under fit provocation and reason," less justifiable, or less a matter of right, or that our Government is compellable to more enduring and permanent resistance of such rebellion, than would be the case if no such written compact existed.

Now, this is an entire misapprehension of the views I intended to present; and I much regret that any want of explicitness, or of suitable precaution in negating such inferences, should have led to it.

Our Constitution, on which our nationality is based, is not a compact between the *several States*, nor, in any sense, a *partnership* between them. *It is the organic law of nationality*, adopted by *the citizens* of all the States *combining themselves into one people as a nation*. The preamble runs thus: "WE, THE PEOPLE *of the United States*, in order to form a *more perfect union*, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ORDAIN and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." Not (I pray you to mark) "*We, the several sovereign and independent States*," heretofore *confederated* merely, and already known by the *partnership name*, if you please, (for such it then was,) of "the United States;" but "*We, the people of the United States*," the constituent citizens and voters of each and all of them, do, for the purpose of *more perfect union* and all the other enumerated purposes of *one national life*, "ordain and

establish *this Constitution* ;” electing, nevertheless, *as a new-born nation*, to be still known by the *same name* which our several States, as States, heretofore assumed under their old league of confederation, now merged in complete national individuality. We, the people, keep the name ; but we henceforth change *in toto* the substance of the thing.

This Constitution was adopted and ratified, *not by the States* in their corporate capacities, *but by the people* of the several States, in *popular conventions* ; not acting by or through their respective State legislatures or executive officers or any other *State* representatives, but in their primary capacity of *citizens of one country*, forming for themselves a *new* government.

Every citizen owes to the Constitution, and to the National Government which it creates, *immediate personal allegiance*, in the same manner and to the same extent as respects all purposes of National Government, as if no State organization or any other interior political institution were in existence. The States, indeed, are recognized in the Constitution as political corporations for certain purposes ; and their sovereignty, in all matters not delegated to the National Government or prohibited to the several States, is carefully preserved ; and they, in their *corporate capacities*, are represented in the Senate of the United States, *though themselves no parties to the compact*. But for all purposes of *national life and government, internal and external*, the citizens of the several States absolutely surrendered all their State rights and obligations, and

their individuality as members of such States, and agreed to be fused, or merged, into one people, with all the corresponding rights and privileges, and subject to all the duties and obligations, involved in a common nationality.

No State, therefore, as such, can claim any right of secession; for it was no party to the compact forming the Constitution. No State, as such, can dissolve the connection between its people and the General Government; for the State did not create that connection. No State can authorize its citizens to revolt against the General Government; for their allegiance to that Government is their own direct personal obligation: and any attempted dissolution of that obligation, or revolt against it, is, notwithstanding any such assumed authority or ratification by a particular State, a crime in the revolting citizens of that State, as individual persons, against the General Government, as fully as if no such State authority had attempted to intervene.

The Government, therefore, in attempting to put down this Rebellion, is not making war against any State or States as such, nor against the whole people of any State or States, but against its own individual revolted subjects, — organized rebels in arms, guilty of treason, — who happen to be resident in those States; and this is wholly irrespective of their relation to any particular State, as being at the same time its citizens or subjects, for purposes within the legitimate sphere of State authority.

The case, therefore, is, in this respect, precisely similar to the case of any other government's undertaking to suppress treason or revolt, and is to be considered and judged of upon precisely the same principles of domestic and international law. Nor did I mean to be understood, that, because our nationality is thus based upon a written Constitution, to which every citizen is a party, *therefore* the *moral right of revolution or rebellion*, "*under fit provocation and reason*," is less clear and indisputable than it would be if no such written Constitution were in existence, and our nationality had been formed, or grown up, without one. On the contrary, we maintain that doctrine of the right of revolution, under fit provocation, as an essential axiom of free government; and, in the case you put, if I were a citizen of Indiana, I should probably gird myself or my sons for the struggle, as I do now, though with infinitely less reason.

If you recur to my letters (Nos. V. and VI.), in which I insist upon the point, that the peculiarity of our national organization, as founded on a written Constitution, renders impracticable any consent to the separation of the revolted States while insisting upon their right of secession, and renders equally impracticable any other of the courses suggested by you as being advisable to enable us to subdue or get rid of them, you will see that this argument was only in reply to those particular positions taken by you, without any reference to the general question of the right of rebellion or revolution for justifiable cause. The

discussion was upon the rights of, or the policy proper to be adopted by, the *existing Government of the United States*, and not upon the rights which would exist, or might be advisable for the *people* to act upon in a primary convention, for the formation of a *new* Government.

Take, for instance, the *right claimed by the States* whose people are in rebellion, *to secede from the Union purely as a matter of right*; not because of any wrong or oppression suffered at the hands of the National Government, but from choice merely. You asked, “Why not let them go?” and you think that it is wonderful that we wish to retain any connection with such a portion of “the Devil’s kingdom,” instead of rejoicing in the opportunity to be rid of it. My answer was, that, as our nationality is founded on our written compact, *we cannot concede this withdrawal of a State to be a right*, without at once admitting that we have *no bond of nationality*; nor without, at the same time, admitting that *every other State* may, at any time, depart at its pleasure. And, upon that hypothesis, where would be our nationality? what its known boundaries? what its power over its subjects? what the obligation or value or permanency of its contracts? what its rights of property in treasure, naval and military armaments, territories, &c., &c.?

But you perceive at once, that this argument does not touch the question of the revolutionary right of the people of those States to revolt for a justifiable cause: that species of right remains just as it was.

notwithstanding the *litera scripta*. Is it not plain, therefore, *that on this point, and to this extent*, (namely, the asserted *right*, not to revolt for cause, but *to secede without cause*.) we *must* claim that our compact is "binding to all eternity" (to use your emphatic language) on the inhabitants of each State, unless the *people* of the *other* States consent to dissolve it? and that, so long as this pretended right of secession at pleasure is adversely asserted by force of arms, we must "fight a world in arms," if need be, rather than yield it? And is not the doctrine of your own, and of every civilized government on earth, *though not founded on written compacts, essentially the same*? Do you admit *the right* of Scotland, Ireland, or Wales, to secede, without justifying cause, and set up independent national sovereignties at pleasure?

But the peculiarity of our written Constitution does bear upon us, with great practical effect, in another important view of this subject, to which my argument was intended to point; namely, the *right of the Government to consent*, for any cause, to any separation of portions of the national domain, or the exemption of any of its subjects from their allegiance to it. If, in the present case, the people of the loyal States, although denying the *right* of secession claimed by the Slave States or their people, were desirous that the proposed separation should take place for the reasons assigned by you or for any other, it clearly would not be competent for *our National Government* to make, or assent to, any such partition of the nation-

al sovereignty and domain, or any such withdrawal of the allegiance of any portion of its subjects ; *because all the powers of the General Government, and all the duties and obligations of the citizens to that Government, are expressly defined and limited by the written Constitution* : and this was made by the *people*, who by its terms, while granting certain powers to the General Government, expressly reserved to themselves and their respective States all powers not so granted, defined, and limited ; and it is self-evident that such powers of disintegration or alienation or denationalization are *not* among those granted, but, of necessity, still reside *only in the whole people*.

In this respect there is a wide and essential difference between our form of government and yours, or any other of which I have knowledge. Our Government is restricted from acting in an emergency which yours could meet ; as the power to release from allegiance your Colonies, or any portion of your national domain, resides, I suppose, unquestionably in your *Government*, without the necessity of any intervention by an act of the *people*. Whether this is to be considered a defect or an advantage in the fabric of our Constitution, is here immaterial : but it obviously does not touch the *right of revolution* for *justifiable cause* ; and therefore does not render the Constitution obnoxious to the charge of imposing heavier or more permanent chains upon its subjects than those by which the subjects of all other governments are held. It only substitutes the people at large, in place of the existing Govern-

ment of the day, as the final judge of the expediency or right of national disintegration, or alienation of national domain. Nor does it, as I apprehend, affect the question of any disintegration of the national domain which may be effected *by force of arms*, either through foreign invasion or through internal revolution, whether for justifiable cause or otherwise. If the rebels should succeed in establishing their independence by their own ability or by the aid of foreign intervention, and our National Government should be driven to terms recognizing it, I suppose that the national authority of the Government over the remaining States, and the allegiance to it of the people of those States, would remain unimpaired, such recognition implying no admission of the right of, nor any assent to, secession at will.

My only object in my argument was to satisfy you, that our written Constitution rendered it impossible for our *Government to assent* to secession, *as matter of right or of expediency*, in the manner and for the reasons you suggested, and at the same time to retain our nationality.

Again: when you said, that, if we were fighting *to put down slavery* or to *subjugate* the rebels as *public enemies*, and not for the purpose of receiving them to our bosoms as fellow-citizens and partners again, we should have the sympathy and applause of Europe, but that it was incomprehensible how we could wish to be again united with their "infernal system," my reply was, as above suggested, that we could not do

either of these things without abandoning or violating our part of the contract contained in the written Constitution, and so releasing them from all obligation under it, and thus destroying the only bond of our nationality.

If we were to carry on this war *for the purpose of compelling the rebels to emancipate their slaves*, although they were willing to cease from all opposition to the Government provided they were allowed to retain their slaves under the Constitution; or should we war against them for the purpose of subduing them as foreign enemies, in order to possess ourselves of their territories as conquered countries, — we could no longer claim of them a particle of allegiance, or deny their right of resistance, after having ourselves impliedly admitted that they could, and did, by their own mere will and act, destroy the national bond, and convert themselves into foreigners. They might, in that case, well maintain, that we were not attempting to re-instate or enforce *the only National Government* which the Constitution has created, but were seeking to establish by force *another and new one, to which neither we nor they had before been consenting parties*.

But this again, you will perceive, does not in any degree affect the right of rebellion or revolution for justifiable cause, or compel our Government in such case to be more pertinacious and unyielding than any other.

In a word, my whole argument, founded on the

peculiarity of a written Constitution, was, or was intended, to show, that under it our Government has no power either to consent, however willing, to the separation of any State, or to admit its right to secede at its own pleasure, or to avoid resisting any attempt to maintain such right by force of arms, or to treat any of its subjects as foreign enemies, or to attempt to change the internal local institutions of any State, without, *ipso facto*, confessing or admitting that the bond of nationality is broken or abandoned, and restoring the people of that and of every other State to their original pre-existing freedom from all allegiance to it; — this argument leaving the* right of revolution for justifiable cause untouched.

Nor does this doctrine interfere, as I apprehend, in any degree, with the right to exercise all needful *military* authority over persons or property, even to the emancipation of the slaves, should that extreme measure be demanded by the exigency as a means for subduing the revolt, and compelling the rebels to return to their allegiance: for military authority is only the law of force, bounded by the necessity which calls for it; and the Constitution recognizes the right to hold rebels, when subdued, only as other lawful subjects, obedient to its obligations; while, for the purpose of subduing them, it leaves the military power of the nation in the hands of its constitutional agents, free to act as the exigency of the case may require.

I have thought it necessary thus to explain our position on this point, — the power of consenting to

secession, — concerning which, it seems that I have inadvertently led you into error. I have only to add, that although our Government has not the powers above alluded to, they being reserved to the people, the Constitution does provide a mode of changing the Constitution itself by amendments, which might be to the effect of vesting such powers in the Government, with the view to their exercise, or to the effect of directly releasing the people of any one or more States from their allegiance.

I am not surprised at your allusions concerning the imprisonments in Fort Lafayette, the censorship of the press, &c. They are griefs to us all, but acquiesced in as temporary expedients, made necessary, in the exercise of martial law, by the peculiar evil under which we labor, in carrying on a war against treason and rebellion, from having in our army and our navy, in our civil government, and throughout all society, a greater or less number of secret secessionists, or sympathizers with the rebels, who resort to all means of communicating to them, in print or privately, the plans and movements and strength, &c., of our army and navy, and every thing that could aid them and harm us.

Perhaps we acquiesce the more readily and patiently from the conviction, always pervading our thoughts, that the evil can never become extensive or dangerously oppressive, or of any duration, without our consent; we having the immediate remedy always at hand in the *ballot-box*, which makes and unmakes legislators and rulers at our will. The evil, however, and the

necessity of resorting to this mode of cure, are already growing less every day.

Allow me to say, that I think you misapprehend the meaning and true bearings of President Lincoln's letter to Mr. Greeley, when you construe it as implying a perfect indifference whether there be or be not slavery as an established part of our Southern system. It is perfectly well known that he, as a man, is utterly opposed to the institution, and would gladly aid in its termination by all lawful and constitutional means ; but that, as a loyal citizen, and as the Chief Executive under the Constitution, he ought not to interfere with it, or seek its destruction, so long as it continues under the protection, though indirectly, of the Constitution which he has sworn to support. He, as the head of the nation, is bound to maintain the Constitution and the Union both inviolate. If he can do this without destroying slavery, he has no right to seek its destruction ; for in so doing, unless as a military necessity, he would become a traitor himself to the very instrument from which alone he derives all his authority. If, however, he cannot maintain the Constitution and the Union without striking down slavery *in order to save THEM*, then he is, in my judgment, justified in destroying it, and ought to do so. And this, as I interpret his letter, is just what he means.

In regard to the treatment of the black man in some of the Free States, it is, I confess, a sad commentary upon the broad principles of equality and philanthropy we profess ; justly exposing us to re-

proach, and diminishing our claim for sympathy in this contest. I believe, however, that the prejudice of race, so strong everywhere, is undergoing amelioration among us; and I trust that we may hereafter become more true to our principles and professions by the establishment of perfect political equality among all classes of citizens of the Republic. But when you cite, as evidence on this point, the President's schemes of voluntary colonization of the blacks, connected with the idea of their gradual emancipation, reflect, I pray you, on what would be the condition of that unfortunate race, suddenly made free, not among the people of the present Free States, not at the North, nor in Canada, — whither they do not desire to go and reside of their own free choice, — but in the sunny States of the South which they now inhabit. Conceive of three millions or more of emancipated blacks living all at once on terms of legal equality with six millions of whites, accustomed from infancy, one and all, to look upon them as beasts of burden, born to subjection. Can there, will there, be *peace* between such races claiming equal rights? If not, what fate can the philanthropist find for the black man? If the prejudice against him as an equal is as strong as you suppose, even now, at the North, must it not be, for some generations at least, insuperable, and quite intolerable to him as a freeman, at the South? Can humanity, in view of this stubborn fact, devise for him any practicable scheme more humane than colonization on some soil of his own, in a clime of his own

choice? Is not the probable alternative implacable war between races that will not mingle? You ask, in connection with this subject, whether it is not a fact, that our ambassadors have orders not to grant passports to free colored people. I answer, No, not to my knowledge or belief. You have derived the idea from the practice of Mr. Buchanan, and perhaps of prior administrations under slaveholding control. Mr. Lincoln's administration issues no such orders, I presume: on the contrary, his Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, issues passports, when applied for, to colored persons as freely as to white; at least, I have seen it so stated in our newspapers, and believe it to be true.

A plan has been suggested of appropriating the State of Florida for the free blacks and liberated slaves who may elect to settle there. It has long been a pet theory with me, that a portion of the Gulf States must eventually become the refuge of the black man, under some relation to us alike beneficial and safe for them and ourselves; but the mode and time must be left to the logic of events, which, under God's guidance, are rapidly hurrying us on to exigencies, positions, and duties, into the nature of which no human foresight can penetrate, and for which we cannot now even begin to provide. I rest, however, in the consoling and inspiring belief, that this mighty upheaving of our nation is to result in the speedy termination of the infernal institution, which, so long its curse, had become at length its flagrant shame in the ascendancy acquired by it in our national councils;

and that God, in his good providence, will guide us in the restoration of liberty to those of his children who have hitherto been trampled upon by the now desperate aristocracy with which we are contending.

The evidence that slavery was and is the sole cause of the Rebellion is so conclusive, and now so distinctly admitted at the South, that it will soon be impossible for any rational man, willing to look at the truth, to doubt it. In confirmation of this, I send to you an extract from the "Richmond Enquirer" (the best possible authority upon the subject), which tells the truth most unmistakably:—

"It is proposed in some parts of the South to make a forced conscription of slaves for purposes of labor. *As the war originated and is carried on in great part for the defence of the slaveholder in his property-rights* AND THE PERPETUATION OF THE INSTITUTION, *he ought to be first and foremost in aiding by every means in his power the triumph and success of our arms.* The slaveholder ought to remember, that, for every negro he thus furnishes, he puts a soldier in the ranks."

I still cherish the hope, though all ground of it seems daily vanishing, that England will yet come to the perception of the truth regarding this Rebellion, and view the course of her people in relation to it with hardly less regret than that course has caused to us.

Ever most faithfully your friend,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq.

X.

HAMPSTEAD, 12 October, 1862.

MY DEAR MR. LORING,

I thought I had concluded our "belligerent" correspondence; but I have just received your parcel of books, and must send my acknowledgments. Count Gasparin's I have already read much of. To a considerable extent, of course, I agree with him: but his leading principle, that Europe has no right to form an opinion how far the North should try to "crush the rebellion" or allow secession, seems to me childish; and his avowed hatred of all rebellion will not find a universal echo in Europe, I trust, or add to the influence of his book.

Bigelow's "Tariff Question" wants a statistical investigation, and an amount of scientific study, I fear I am too prejudiced to give. It is amusing to find him quoting the old exploded views of English protectionists, disavowed now by the very propounders themselves. Push out his views to their legitimate consequences, and every household should dine on home-made crockery, and eat home-grown meat, however coarse, dirty, and porous the plate, or dear the viand. This would be sacrificing a part of one's meals to the Lares of protection, indeed. I can understand

and respect its being done upon religious grounds. When I came to London, a boy, to learn my trade, forty odd years ago, some of my friends knew old Taylor, the Platonist. The story they used to tell, I dare say vamped up a trifle, was, that he sacrificed a piece of every rump-steak or chop to Jupiter; a bit of good food lost to somebody, if only to his dog. But I can respect *that kind* of wastefulness. Your American economist's notion, that, for profit and development's sake, every nation is to look to itself only, wrap itself up in itself, like Horace's miser, — that its trade, if not its charity, is to begin and end at home, — must now-a-days, and with modern experience, have a known or unknown origin in political parties and party objects, and not in philosophy.*

The other volume, "Among the Pines," by Kirke, I have also only just opened. However true in reality, it unhappily has too jaunty and artistic an air to be believed as a statement of facts. I will tell you a story, just come over from some esteemed and most truthful lady friends at Cambridge, near your city, — worth, to me, any number of volumes; all-sufficient, indeed, to force me to the conclusions I have come to. I dare say, it is only one case of a thousand; but one is enough for me.

There was a young and charming lady, at Boston, known to our friends, sent to Boston for education by

* Was I wrong in saying "Professor Carey," in my last letter? Should it not have been "Bowen"? I remember reading, some years since, one protectionist professor's book on political economy, from your side the Atlantic; and, at my age, names become dreams to most men, — to me certainly.

her father, a New-Orleans merchant, devotedly attached to her. She received, just before your war, a letter, telling her to make all speed to New Orleans, if she would see her father alive, as he was fast sinking. She made all haste. When she got there, she found the letter had been written *after he was dead, and by the heirs!* Her mother had black blood in her veins; and the poor child was a slave, and the heirs had thus trepanned her home. They seized and sold her forthwith. Sold her to what fate! Devils upon earth I call them! Why, at least, have they not set up, long since, that law of the old Greeks, that one particle of free blood makes free?

I believe there is an insane desire on the part of many of you Northerners to have a war with England. The appetite "comes," says the proverb, "in eating." The taste of blood makes the thirst for blood. But I pray God that we English may, in all such miseries as war, be kept from any hand-and-glove alliance with those whose laws and manners allow infamies such as that I have related, and who claim such as their peculiar and cherished privilege, — as "the corner-stone of their edifice": and, hoping devoutly for the future good of the North, I pray also that you Northerners may never be tempted into any hand-and-glove alliance or union with them either; least of all into that most intimate of unions for which you are fighting, I think so unhappily. I deplore, from my heart, that wise men among you can desire to have such union, be it even at the expense you seem all

so willing to incur, of recognizing this corner-stone of the edifice, dug, as I believe it, from hell. I do declare, that I would infinitely sooner ally *myself* with a set of pirates, a Black Band of robbers or Arabs, than with those whose very civilization is to be vauntingly based on such principles. Mere thieving by violence, I think, in comparison, quite respectable and lovable. You Northerners could never, I feel sure, have countenanced and applauded such a letter as that of the President, to which in my last I alluded, if you did not, as a nation, habitually look at the black race with Heathen contempt, rather than with Christian pity.

I deeply lament for our own English sake, as well as in respect of the unfairness and brutal coarseness of the conduct as regards the North, the laudatory way in which our papers, so many of them, speak of the South in studied comparison with the North. The South should never, if I had my will, be spoken of without the epithet "blood-selling," or other such, stuck to its name. I do not wonder at your Northern anger. The writers in question *hope* to excite it. The more insolent towards you the language they invent, the more proud they are of their own genius; but, till you come to loathe a slave connection, I, for one, shall all the same continue to think you mortally wrong.

But I have written too much for any one who writes from feeling, and not from knowledge of the subjects we have been treating; and who writes, also, with no

practice or aptitude for dealing with such matters : and so I will now, if you please, close the paper and theme, far too long dwelt on by me ; and this shall be “ *longe finis chartæque viæque.*”

Yours very truly,

EDWIN W. FIELD.

Hon. CHARLES G. LORING,
Boston, Massachusetts.

XI.

BOSTON, November 13, 1862.

*
MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote my answer to your letter of September 23d on the day after its arrival; and having concluded, in conformity with your assent, to put our correspondence into print, (leaving the question of publication, or private circulation only, for future determination,) I decided to send it to you in that form, inasmuch as I had taken no new positions, nor attempted any further replies to your arguments, but confined myself mainly to the correction of an erroneous interpretation of my views of the binding force of our Constitution as a written compact (into which my want of more careful phraseology may have tended to lead you), with responses to some of your general remarks or inquiries to which I could not perceive that you would care to rejoin; and I anticipated that you would have received it without a much greater interval of time than would be required for its transmission in the usual form by mail: but it has taken much more than I expected, to have our correspondence printed to my satisfaction; considerable delay being incurred by the illness of my friend who undertook the correction of the proofs, — a task for which my inexperience as an author makes

me unfit. And it thus happens that I receive yours of the 12th of October before having despatched mine of the 10th.

I have but little to say in reply. I think the complexity of the question, and the peculiar circumstances of our political and social condition, which we alone can fully know and appreciate, constitute no slight ground for the opinion of Count Gasparin ; not, perhaps, that Europe has no right to form any opinion (for some she must of necessity have) how far we should try to crush the rebellion or prevent secession, but, at the least, that such opinion should be very carefully considered, with some distrust of her comparative means of judgment, some deference to the views of those most deeply interested, some faith in the purity and sincerity of their motives, and some sympathy in their sacrifices of all that is most dear to them in a cause which they believe to be alike that of God and man. But, in all these particulars, English opinion certainly, if not European also to a great extent, with but few honorable exceptions, has been and is, as it seems to us, most lamentably wanting. We see no answers, no willingness even to listen to our protests and arguments, founded on the necessities of our condition, compelling us to the work of crushing the rebellion and preventing secession as the only means of preserving our national life ; — no respect for the depth and earnestness of our convictions ; — no sympathy in the sacrifices of treasure, and of lives far dearer than treasure, which we are mak-

ing under those convictions; -- but, instead thereof, we see the ready, and, as we think, in most cases willingly blind, adoption of the belief of the destruction of our nationality as a foregone conclusion, and the (to us) seemingly marvellous conviction of even our few friends, that it is not worth saving, but that our best course would be to abandon all hopes of its preservation, and rush into political chaos, with the permitted erection of a powerful and permanent slave empire to divide with us the hitherto national domain, rather than to compel the return of the slaveocracy to their allegiance, with the certainty, as we deem it, of soon extirpating the curse of slavery from the continent by a wise and judicious system of progressive emancipation.

You do not contemplate slavery, or any voluntary connection with it, with more abhorrence than most of us in the Free States: and, for one, I am free to say, that rather than consent to have the Constitution permanently construed and administered as it was, and for some time had been, under the controlling influence of slavery, and for the purpose of using that Constitution and the Union for its extension and perpetuation, and for rendering it a national instead of a local institution, I should prefer immediate and entire separation from the Slave States, at the cost of having a neighboring slave empire, or any thing else; because, however innocently one, born and reared in the shadow of slavery, might assent to or aid in such extension and perpetuation, a similar assent would

make us, with our convictions, guilty of an enormous crime. But no such question is before us, and no such necessity can ever be enforced upon us. We are fighting *to restore the Union and the Constitution to their just supremacy, and for the subjugation of slavery under them*, with no question in our minds that its former political power, so flagrantly abused, will be substantially annihilated, and its early extirpation follow as an inevitable political and social necessity; and in full belief that *this is the only means of its safe and early destruction*, and that *to permit the secession, which you seem to think so desirable and reasonable*, would be not only the most effectual mode of continuing to ourselves its hateful presence and accursed political influences, but *the only one by which its existence can be extended and perpetuated*.

I think, my dear friend, that if you will give a little more consideration to these elements of our case, and the incessant animosity exhibited by your press generally, and the conduct of large portions of your people in enabling the rebels to continue the contest (without which aid they could not maintain it for a month), you will be disposed to qualify, if not to discard, the belief suggested in your last letter, that "there is an insane desire on the part of many of us Northerners to have a war with England," founded in "the thirst for blood" excited by "the taste" of it in this war. Indeed, I cannot think that you realized the full force of your expression when penning it. That there is a general, not to say universal feeling, that

England greatly wrongs us in sentiment and opinion, and in essential aid to the traitors in arms against us, and has proved herself a foe where we most confidently looked for a friend, I cannot deny ; nor can I see how we could think otherwise. But the feeling, as far as known to me, is one of grief and disappointment more than of angry resentment, with a profound conviction that the avenging Nemesis will not require the imbruing of our hands in her blood. We think we see consequences to her of this willing alienation of a great and growing nation, kindred in blood, religion, and love of freedom, far more serious and permanent than a temporary sanguinary war would be, however it might end ; and we are content to rest on them.

Surely, my dear friend, you cannot believe that we, who are pouring out the blood of our brothers and children like water in this struggle in the cause of our country and of God (for such we believe it to be), can wish to add to the hecatomb by a war with you, or that the sacrifices thus made on the altar of patriotism inspire us with a cannibal thirst for human blood. No, my friend : if there must be war between us and England, — which I pray God to avert, — its sin and blood will be on her head, and not on ours.

As to all questions about free-trade, tariffs, &c., I profess to have very little scientific knowledge ; but it seems to me quite obvious, that, however plausible or sound any theory may be upon settled data or assumed hypotheses, there is no such necessary similarity of

condition in any two great commercial nations as to render it alike applicable to both. We have no doubt, that in England's present condition, standing, as she does, at the head of the manufacturing and commercial interests of the world, unrestricted free trade is her true policy ; though she does not, even now, hold to it in articles which she neither produces nor manufactures, (as, for instance, tobacco, of which this country is the chief producer,) and thus falsifies her own theory where it conflicts with a particular interest. Nor have we any doubt, that, before the establishment of this supremacy (entirely owing, as we believe, to her ancient rigid system of protection), free trade would not, and could not, have been considered either politic or possible.

Our convictions are equally clear, that with our vast extent of territory, diversities of climate, indefinite capacities of production, and varied and enormous internal commerce, (rendering us a world within ourselves,) and especially in our present condition and pressing necessities, the protective system is alike essential to our prosperity and our independence.

It is a question which each nation has a right to settle for itself, avoiding only discriminations, with obviously hostile design, against any one nation as distinguished from the rest.

The sad story to which you allude, although true in some of its essential tragic elements, and in that most profoundly illustrative of the hatefulness and demoralizing influences of slavery, and of one of the phases

of Southern life represented in "Home among the Pines," is not true in others, as I am told upon inquiry of friends in Cambridge.

The young lady (for such she was in disposition, accomplishments, and manners) was received into society as the daughter of a wealthy Southern gentleman. She was sent here for education, and remained for several years. She was supplied by him with money abundantly, and became very attractive as possessing much beauty, vivacity, and various taste. She voluntarily returned home upon hearing of her father's illness, and found him and his affairs in a helpless condition; and soon afterwards died of fever, as it is alleged and believed, at the house of a married sister in another State, though near to the residence of her father. If the mother was, as is understood, a slave, the daughter would unquestionably, as I understand the laws of the Slave States, have been legally accounted among his salable chattels if she had survived him without manumission, and his creditors or heirs had claimed her as a slave. If the mother were not a slave, the existence of such irregular connections, the frequent if not necessary results of the institution, is hardly less destructive of the happiness and position of the progeny. The life of this young lady was made miserable by knowledge of her birth; and death was a happy release from that misery, if not from the infinitely more wretched fate, which, by the laws of slavery, might otherwise have befallen her.

You have no right to question that our abhorrence and loathing, in the free States, of this infernal ownership and trade in human flesh, inherited by a portion of our country, is as profound and animating as your own. I believe it is much more so; being with you a mere sentiment, while with us are added to it the consciousness of the disgrace it brings as a recognized political institution in parts of our country under the ægis of the Constitution, and the daily practical outrages upon our feelings and sense of duty in its perpetual struggles for ascendancy and ever-grasping encroachments in our national councils. Nor can you doubt the entire sincerity of our declaration, that we feel, and believe we know, that, in fighting to maintain the Constitution and the Union, we are so far from fighting to continue a voluntary partnership in the accursed system of slavery (as you seem to believe), we are, by necessary consequence, fighting for its present subjugation and eventual extirpation. This war was commenced against us, by the Slave States, for the subversion of the Constitution and the Union, because of the shackles imposed by them upon the extension and perpetuation of slavery, and of the perception by the slaveocracy that the power of abusing them for those ends was passing from their hands. The avowed purpose of it was the erection of a slave empire upon their ruins. We entered into it solely for the maintenance of the Union and the Constitution: but, in defending ourselves in a war undertaken by our enemies for such purposes, it has, of inevitable

necessity, become, on our part, a war also substantially against slavery ; and cannot terminate successfully for us, without such an annihilation of the political influence and power of the slaveocracy, such a weakening of all the former securities of the institution, and such a manifestation of its inherent rottenness, weakness, and hatefulness, as will insure its eventual and not very distant abolishment under the Constitution and the Union which we are seeking to restore. Or it may be, that the stern necessity of the contest may compel us to the immediate emancipation of the slaves, as one of the justifiable means of subduing the Rebellion ; although such emancipation would not abolish the power, in the Slave States, to hold slaves thereafter, if it should become possible to acquire them.

Our success, therefore, must, in any event, have the effect substantially to destroy the institution which you so justly denounce ; while the measure which you theoretically advocate, and which a large portion of your countrymen are diligently working by material aid to effect, — namely, the independence of the Slave States, — is precisely that, and that alone, by which this institution can be extended and perpetuated, and become more rampant and uncontrollable in its detestable power and influences.

It gives to us the most sincere and gratifying encouragement in reference to the future relations of our countries, that there are among you men of the ability and candor of Professor Cairnes and Mr. Mill, who have undertaken to enlighten your countrymen as to

the true nature of this contest, and the consequences of success to the rebel cause. I read Professor Cairnes's book, with great admiration of his masterly grasp of the subject, last October; though dissenting from one of his conclusions, as to the necessity of permitting the establishment, by a portion of the Slave States, of an independent slave empire, — a conclusion which I doubt not that he will rejoice with us in finding erroneous, when the struggle shall be over. I have not yet read the review of it, by Mr. Mill, in the "Westminster" (which I shall hasten to get), but learn that it is entirely confirmatory of the views taken by Professor Cairnes, excepting in the conclusion alluded to, from which he dissents. I presume that England has no profounder or more just thinker within her realm than Mr. Mill, whose works are as extensively known here as there; and Professor Cairnes seems to have entitled himself to stand in the foremost rank of her political jurists. If they shall succeed in disabusing the English mind, in any considerable degree, of the error, and consequent injustice, now pervading it in regard to our country and its cause, your countrymen, no less than mine, will have reason to hold them in perpetual honored remembrance.

And this, my dear friend, brings me to the close, on my part, of our indeed very long, but to me very interesting and friendly, "belligerent" correspondence, as you are pleased to term it; though surely no otherwise belligerent than in the subjects treated of. I lament that the vindication of my country was in

such feeble hands that I leave you unconvinced of what seems to us so plain, — the justice of our cause, and its claims upon the sympathy of the world, as the cause of freedom, humanity, and good government. But I confidently trust that it cannot be long before this will be as apparent to you and your people as it now is to us.

Ever faithfully your friend,

CHARLES G. LORING.

EDWIN W. FIELD, Esq.

P. S. — I have no doubt that the author referred to in your letter of the 12th of October was Mr. Bowen, Professor of Moral Philosophy and Political Economy at Cambridge. Mr. Carey, although a very eminent writer upon the latter subject, has never, that I remember, been a professor, or been so styled.

*Presented by
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